

RAILWAY LIBRARY . EIGHTEEN PENCE

MIRIAM MAY



ROUTLEDGE'S CHEAP LITERATURE.

Any Volume free by post on the receipt of cost, and extra for postage.

* * * A detailed Catalogue of 500 Volumes, gratis on application.

THE RAILWAY LIBRARY.

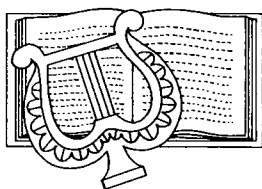
In Boards, 1s. per volume, unless specified.

Ditto 1s. 6d. „ marked (*).

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 11 Charms and Counter Charms. | <i>Muckay.</i> | 134 Jane Seton (2s.) | <i>Grant.</i> |
| 17 *Longbeard. | <i>Seagwick.</i> | 135 Philip Rollo (2s.) | <i>Grant.</i> |
| 18 *Hope Leslie. | <i>Crowe.</i> | 137 *Mansfield Park. | <i>Austen.</i> |
| 19 *Lilly Dawson. | <i>Grant.</i> | 138 *Emma. | <i>Austen.</i> |
| 21, 22 Romance of War (2s.) | <i>Anon.</i> | 139 *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion. | <i>Austen.</i> |
| 26, 27 Aide-de-Camp (2s.) | <i>Grant.</i> | | <i>Carleton.</i> |
| 28, 29 Whitefriars, 1 vol. (2s.) | <i>Porter.</i> | 140 *Fardorougha. | <i>Ditto.</i> |
| 32 *Knight of St. John. | <i>Ward.</i> | 141 *The Emigrants. | <i>Ditto.</i> |
| 33, 34 Jasper Lyle (2s.) | <i>Grant.</i> | 142 *Tithe Proctor. | <i>Ditto.</i> |
| 36, 37 Scottish Cavalier (2s.) | <i>Porter.</i> | 143 Perkin Warbeck (2s.) | <i>Mrs. Shelley.</i> |
| 39 *Recluse of Norway. | <i>Brunton.</i> | 145 *The Chelsea Veterans. | <i>Gleig.</i> |
| 43 *Self-Control. | <i>Crowe.</i> | 146 *Schinderhannes. | <i>Ritchie.</i> |
| 44, 45 Night Side of Nature (2s.) | <i>Maillard.</i> | 147 *Collegians. | <i>G. Griffin.</i> |
| 46 *Zingra the Gipsy. | <i>Harris.</i> | 148 *Munster Festivals. | <i>Ditto.</i> |
| 48 *Martin Beck. | <i>Carling.</i> | 149 *The Rivals. | <i>Ditto.</i> |
| 49 Soldier of Fortune. | <i>Crowe.</i> | 151 *Peregrine Bunce. | <i>Hook.</i> |
| 50 Susan Hopley (2s.) | <i>Goldsmid.</i> | 152 Con Cregan (2s.) | <i>Anon.</i> |
| 51 Viola. | <i>Ward.</i> | 154 *Violet, the Danseuse. | <i>Anon.</i> |
| 52 Helen Charteris. | <i>Anon.</i> | 155 Prairie Bird (2s.) | <i>Murray.</i> |
| 53, 54 Whitehall (2s.) | <i>Reestab.</i> | 156 Linny Lockwood (2s.) | <i>Crowe.</i> |
| 55 *Polish Lancer. | <i>Maillard.</i> | 157 Petticoat Government (2s.) | <i>Trollope.</i> |
| 57 Compulsory Marriage. | <i>Dumas.</i> | 158 Captain Blake (2s.) | <i>Maxwell.</i> |
| 60 Three Musketeers (2s.) | <i>Kingston.</i> | 160 The Bivouac (2s.) | <i>Maxwell.</i> |
| 61 *Albatross. | <i>Godwin.</i> | 161 *Marriage in High Life. | <i>Scott.</i> |
| 65 Caleb Williams. | <i>Anon.</i> | 162 Ladder of Gold (2s.) | <i>R. Bell.</i> |
| 67 Caesar Borgia (2s.) | <i>Porter.</i> | 163 Maid of Orleans (2s.) | <i>Anon.</i> |
| 68 Scottish Chiefs (2s.) | <i>Anon.</i> | 164 Millionaire (2s.) | <i>Costello.</i> |
| 69 *Rockingham. | <i>Porter.</i> | 165 *Gold Worshippers. | <i>Anon.</i> |
| 70 *Thaddeus of Warsaw. | <i>Gore.</i> | 166 The Divorced. | <i>Lady Bury.</i> |
| 74 *Money Lender. | <i>Hannay.</i> | 167 Collin Clink (2s.) | <i>Hooton.</i> |
| 76 *Singleton Fontenoy. | <i>Gore.</i> | 168 Hector O'Halloran (2s.) | <i>Maxwell.</i> |
| 82 *Pin Money. | <i>Anon.</i> | 170 Country Curate (2s.) | <i>Gleig.</i> |
| 89 *Torlogh O'Brien. | <i>"Rockingham."</i> | 172 One Fault (2s.) | <i>Mrs. Trollope.</i> |
| 94 *Electra. | <i>Martineau.</i> | 173 *The Rifleman. | <i>Capt. Rayfer.</i> |
| 96 *Hour and Man. | <i>Grey.</i> | 174 Salathiel (2s.) | <i>Dr. Croly.</i> |
| 106 *The Duke. | <i>Porter.</i> | 175 Clockmaker (2s.) | <i>Sam Slick.</i> |
| 109 Pastor's Fireside (2s.) | <i>Maxwell.</i> | 176 Rory O'More (2s.) | <i>Saml. Lover.</i> |
| 111 *Stories of Waterloo. | <i>A. Smith.</i> | 177 *Capt. O'Sullivan. | <i>Maxwell.</i> |
| 113 *Marchioness Brinvilliers. | <i>Anon.</i> | 179 Manœuvring Mother (2s.) | <i>By the Author of "The Flirt."</i> |
| 115 Love and Ambition. | <i>Cupples.</i> | 180 Half-Brothers (2s.) | <i>Dumas.</i> |
| 117 *Green Hand. | <i>Lever.</i> | 181 Monte Cristo (2s. 6d.) | <i>Dumas.</i> |
| 118 Arthur O'Leary (2s.) | <i>A. Smith.</i> | 182 Two Frigates (The) (2s.) | <i>Cupples.</i> |
| 119 Ledbury's Adventures (2s.) | <i>Maxwell.</i> | 184 Top Sail Sheet Blocks. (2s.) | <i>Old Sailor.</i> |
| 121 Luck is Everything (2s.) | <i>Barham.</i> | | |
| 123 *My Cousin Nicholas. | <i>Grant.</i> | | |
| 125 Bothwell (2s.) | <i>A. Smith.</i> | | |
| 126 Scattergood Family (2s.) | <i>Hood.</i> | | |
| 128 Tynney Hall (2s.) | <i>Trollope.</i> | | |
| 130 *The Ward. | <i>Anon.</i> | | |
| 132 Owen Tudor (2s.) | | | |

London: ROUTLEDGE, WARNES, & ROUTLEDGE, Farringdon Street.

Emory University Library



In Memoriam

Ruth Candler Lovett

1935-1964



ROUTLEDGE'S CHEAP LITERATURE.

BY G. P. R. JAMES.

Price 1s. each, boards.

EVA ST. CLAIR.

MARGARET GRAHAM.

Price 1s. 6d. each, boards.

AGINCOURT.
ARABELLA STUART.
ARRAH NEIL.
ATTILA.
BEAUCHAMP.
CASTELNEAU.
CASTLE OF EHRENSTEIN.
CHARLES TYRRELL.
DELAWARE.
DE L'ORNE.
FALSE HEIR.
FOREST DAYS.
FORGERY.
GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

HEIDELBERG.
JACQUERIE.
KING'S HIGHWAY.
MAN-AT-ARMS.
MARY OF BURGUNDY.
MY AUNT PONTYPOOL.
ONE IN A THOUSAND.
ROBBER.
ROSE D'ALBERT.
RUSSELL.
SIR THEODORE BROUGHTON.
STEPMOTHER.
WHIM AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.
DARK SCENES OF HISTORY.

Price 2s. each, boards; or, in cloth gilt, 2s. 6d.

BRIGAND.
CONVICT.
DARNLEY.
GIPSY.
GOWRIE.
MORLEY ERNSTEIN.
RICHELIEU.
LEONORA D'ORCO.

HENRY MASTERTON.
HENRY OF GUISE.
HUGUENOT.
JOHN MARSTON HALL.
PHILIP AUGUSTUS.
SMUGGLER.
WOODMAN.
THE OLD DOMINION.

THE BLACK EAGLE; or, Ticonderoga.

* * Mr. James's Novels enjoys a wide-world reputation, and, with the exception of Sir Walter Scott, no author was ever so extensively read. His works, from the purity of their style, are universally admitted into Book Clubs, Mechanics' Institutions and private families.

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON'S WORKS.

In fcap. 8vo, price One Shilling each, boards.

LEILA; or, the Siege of Granada.

PILGRIMS OF THE RHINE (The).

In fcap. 8vo, price One Shilling and Sixpence each, boards.

LCRETIA.
PELVAM.
DEPREUX.
DICK NED (The).
LAST DAYS OF POMPEII (The).
ZANONI.

GODOLPHIN.
PAUL CLIFFORD.
ALICE; or, the Mysteries.
ERNEST MALTRAVERS.
EUGENE ARAM.

In fcap. 8vo, price 2s. each, boards.

NIGHT AND MORNING.
MY NOVEL. 2 Vols.
HAROLD.

RIENZI.
CARTONS (The).
LAST OF THE BARONS.

"England's greatest Novelist."—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

London: ROUTLEDGE, WARNES, & ROUTLEDGE, Farringdon Street.

MIRIAM MAY.

A ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:
ROUTLEDGE, WARNE, & ROUTLEDGE,
FARRINGDON STREET;
NEW YORK: 56, WALKER STREET.

1861.

I INSCRIBE THIS

TO

A PERFECT WIFE.

CONTENTS.



CHAPTER I.

	<i>Page</i>
THE WORKHOUSE DOOR.....	1

CHAPTER II.

EVELYN MERVYN	16
---------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

THE BOX ON THE STAGE	26
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH MRS. DUBBELFAISE BY REQUEST CASTS THE FIRST STONE	37
---	----

CHAPTER V

WHAT BEFELL "FAITH WITHOUT WORKS" IN GLAS- TONBURY	58
---	----

CHAPTER VI.

GLASTONBURY GRANGE AND ITS INDWELLERS	72
---	----

CHAPTER VII.

HOW MY TUTOR LOST HIS EYE	89
---------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEREIN MR. LATIMER LATITUDE THREATENS THE LAW	103
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH MR. FIFIE, Q.C., IS SPECIALLY RETAINED	116
---	-----

CHAPTER X.

HOW MIRIAM MAY FED A FIRE IN JUNE.....	145
--	-----

CHAPTER XI.

SHYING AT THE COLLAR	163
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XII.

LOST AND WON ; OR, HOW THE TWO P.'S DID IT ...	184
--	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCERNING THE CURE OF SOULS AND THE CARES OF THE FLESH	201
--	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

LONG CREDIT AND LONG HOURS.....	215
---------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XV.

THE NEW BISHOP OF ST. AMBROSE.....	227
------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

ANATHEMA MARAN-ATHA	240
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVII.

FIRST LOVE	252
------------------	-----

Page

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE	264
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RECORD OF THE RING	276
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XX.

COMING HOME	289
-------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXI.

COME HOME	299
-----------------	-----

MIRIAM MAY.



CHAPTER I.

THE WORKHOUSE DOOR.

It certainly *was* the night-bell that rang.

Little things not unfrequently contribute to significant conclusions, and although the music of a doctor's bell can hardly call for any very special chronicles, in this instance it may well evidence a resisting power on the part of a member of the College of Surgeons, who was not the less at all points a man, because he was an accoucheur at all seasons.

Harvey Mountaigne neither swore nor went on sleeping when he heard that bell.

It is not all of us who could affirm that, under the circumstances, we should have done neither. The more demonstrative amongst us would very well accomplish both. And it must be a harsh judgment which could say that Harvey Mountaigne, in his bed there, lay wholly unprovoked. Over night he had made many good resolutions; and these good resolutions had been in the main confirmed by his wife. He had had a hard week's work, and a harder day's labour, and he struggled

to no very great purpose with a very bad cold. Mrs. Mountaigne thought the town might better yield up her husband for the night, than part with its doctor—as was possible—at once and for ever. So Harvey Mountaigne took his own counsel, and prescribed for himself, and very clearly defined in that diagnosis was his wife's authority to soak his feet, get into a perspiration, and go to bed.

Thither he had gone at half-past nine, and within the hour there had he been joined by Mrs. Mountaigne, who had builded her hopes high on the power of mustard and water, and a long night's rest for her husband. Indeed, there was no probability of his being disturbed. The town just then was unusually healthy, and his earliest lady patient was calculated at Wednesday week. He was in his first sleep, with a moist skin; that was all good Mrs. Mountaigne had hoped for, when the bell rang, and announced that the calculations of hypothesis are at all times liable to various and unaccountable influences.

It was but to little purpose that that excellent lady had encased his swathing limbs in flannel. Harvey Mountaigne in the face of a large and increasing practice, forgot that by the desire of his wife he should be an invalid for that particular night, and sneezing afresh as he crossed the room, he approached the window, and with considerable caution drew aside the curtains. Harvey Mountaigne's night-bell did not alone ring when Harvey Mountaigne was in request, as a licensed practitioner. The lads of Glastonbury and its neighbourhood were, for the most part, like those other

lads who live in all other neighbourhoods. On more than one occasion Mr. Mountaigne's nights had been quite unnecessarily disturbed. His bell had been rung as though he were in instant request, whilst there was no one in sight when Mr. Mountaigne in his dressing-gown had appeared to answer it. The doctor of Glastonbury was not behindhand in appreciating all local humour, but this was a pointless liberty to take with a man who was a licentiate in medicine, and had a pathological reputation that was not by any means local.

Twice, and I believe thrice, did the doctor's bell ring for nought. Mr. Mountaigne was in all respects a man of resources, and if there was any joke in pulling his wires, he determined to cultivate the acquaintance of the joker. One evening, some three weeks before the night that we are now concerned with, the doctor of Glastonbury had with infinite gusto prepared an infamous compound of salts and senna, that could hardly have been without result upon the liver of the most confirmed dyspeptic. So much of his revenge completed, Harvey Mountaigne waited for the enemy behind a large tree that stood before his house.

It was the week after Christmas, and the seasons then contributed frost and snow, instead of the almost melon-ripening mildness of our more modern winters. It was midnight, and the doctor, who was dozing while he watched, fancied that he heard a step; and about what he fancied there soon was no mistake.

Harvey Mountaigne, withal a man who struck

hard when he did strike, had been so long in expectancy in the cold, that he could look on anything with calmness. It was not long before the senna decoction was unwittingly challenged.

A young man had come in sight, and seized the night-bell with something of that familiarity which seemed to indicate that he knew its whereabouts, and having rung the bell, walked on to Glastonbury as though he had rung no bell at all. Harvey Mountaigne stood in his path, and the recognition was mutual. The *venue* of the next act was the surgery, where the young man, who now saw nothing in the joke, was on his back between the doctor's knees.

The elixir, distilled with all regard to its being remembered, was held aloft, as one alternative in the hands of the avenging doctor.

When the potion had all but reached the lips of the joker, who only cared for his realization of a practical joke, there was an aggressive movement from below the doctor's knees, that well-nigh spilled the senna.

"It's not gentlemanly of you to do that," said Mr. Mountaigne with mock seriousness, to the grocer's assistant—for it was he—with a twinkle in his eye, which showed that he was now having *his* innings.

"Let me go!" roared the young man, who had now smelt what was offered in undoubted quality, in at least an imperial pint, and struggling to get clear of the purgative, without much result.

"You will swallow this, or I shall call in a policeman," said the doctor, with much inward satisfaction, for he knew in which form his ulti-

matum would be most agreeable. And the young man drank to the dregs what warred with his stomach, and called at the dispensary the next day to beg a bit of ginger—and that was the beginning and the end in Glastonbury of loose lads ringing the doctor's night-bell.

It was under circumstances such as these, circumstances which certainly warranted considerable caution, that Mr. Mountaigne drew aside the curtains, and looked out into the dark night.

Beneath the window there stood a servant in livery, holding two horses, and it was at once evident to the doctor that the message was from none other than his friends at Glastonbury Grange.

A few words soon put him in possession of all the facts.

Mrs. Trevor had been seized with symptoms that no loving or sagacious husband could treat with indifference.

Those were not the days of "telegrams;" most things came by arrangement, or it was not surprising that they came not at all.

Mr. Mountaigne, as he hurriedly drew on his clothes, was reminded that this was but the 23rd of January, and that Mrs. Trevor had at the earliest a place in his journals for the 5th proximo.

It was not because the Trevors of Glastonbury Grange were great people in those parts, that Harvey Mountaigne put aside all personal considerations and prepared for a ride of five miles, with his every pore provoking cold.

He knew that Mrs. Trevor had been taken in her great sorrow suddenly; and although he

looked very properly upon all those nurses who infest the lying-in room as the "devil's own sisters," he had reason to know that the wife of Charles Trevor felt comfort in her nurse, and that nurse was miles away.

In the face of a snow-storm, and a frost that has no counterpart in these days, Harvey Mountaigne was soon in the saddle on his way to Glastonbury Grange.

I don't know any man that I would sooner ask to see my wife through her troubles than the good doctor of Glastonbury. I have always believed the friendship of Harvey Mountaigne to be one of my most inestimable possessions. Although he neither wore a frill, nor was at all given to saying those soft nothings which to most women come kindly, and which but few absolutely hate, no more genial presence ever gave brightness to those who were sometimes like to despair, or lent a kindlier glow to a sick-room. Harvey Mountaigne is not introduced here inasmuch as on that particular night he was taken from his bed to Glastonbury Grange, indispensable because a woman's hour was come, and that over, to be sent back forgotten to his drugs.

I must maintain that I have produced him at a moment when he becomes as it were the centre of whatever action this history may lay claim to, and of whatever interest it may in any way give birth to.

I was as yet unborn when the night-bell rang on that 23rd of January, but it was my coming that took Harvey Mountaigne from his bed that night. As I shall have much to say upon being

very generally misunderstood, the explanation of what I have had to suffer may perhaps be found in the fact, which all Glastonbury can attest, that whilst I was arranged for on the 5th of February, I was born before my time.

Had it been a summons from the pauper mother of the idiot girl, who was so long in dying, in that hovel to the left of the doctor's house, and who was much given to break blood-vessels, that threatened dissolution—when there was so little blood to escape, and profit by the opportunity—long before the last lingering change was felt to be at hand, Harvey Mountaigne would have gone just as he went to the Trevors when I was born; or as he would go to the great blaspheming man, who was once on "the turf," and who was just then so nearly under it, cursing and dying in the county town.

When the cry came, no matter from whom, Harvey Mountaigne heard it. He had been educated where there was no respect of persons, and I must really some day find out where that was.

It would be neither the truth, nor would it be justice to imagine that under these circumstances which—if not special, as I must hold them to be—were of no ordinary import, Harvey Mountaigne tarried by the way. The roads were very slippery, and like much that looks smooth in this world of ours, very treacherous, and the cold such as could hardly profit his own health much.

But the doctor was not lightly esteemed at Glastonbury Grange, and he felt towards the family all the warmth that was so reciprocated.

Premising that we shall not have to wait long for his coming, I must ask those who will follow me to anticipate his visit; and, as the patient can be yet under no orders not to see us, enter with me into my mother's room.

I feel naturally anxious that my arrival—which was then so imminent—shall not be one without some interest. I shall have much to say to those who may continue this narrative upon the Trevors of Glastonbury, and on Glastonbury Grange; but as I see Mrs. Trevor is just now disinclined to make the introduction, I must crave leave to make public the circumstances under which—whilst being yet unborn—I set aside the grave arrangements which I feel I was bound to respect.

“My angel,” said Mr. Trevor to my mother, as they sat at breakfast on the morning of the 23rd, “do you feel *quite* sure that you are equal to dine at the McGrabs to-night.”

My mother, whose reply rested upon certain contingencies that might well arise between that and the 5th proximo, was quite sure she could “go through it.” My father, who was very much her senior, and had married her entirely from a love that no one else had ever shared, looked into her beautiful and anxious face, and said from his very soul “Bless you!” with that ineffable tenderness which spoke at my birth through a chain of time, and stood on his lips when he was parted from me in that long February frost now years ago. I do not know when my mother reckoned so much on her powers of patient endurance, that there was any very special significance in her determination

to "go through" the ordeal of what in its seeming was in every way a "friendly dinner."

I have nothing beyond this to offer in explanation.

Mr. McGrab, who was a very distant relation of my father's family, had long felt, not only generally, that it was not good for man to be alone, but that there was an isolation even in a career so unexceptionably irreproachable as his. His bowels yearned after a manner that was not to his comfort towards a being whose charms had often been canvassed but scarcely ever criticised. This lady, in her unselfishness, had been even as a daughter to my father ever since his widowhood; but it is possible that, beside her paramount feelings of disinterestedness and devotion, she, at certain seasons of temptation, felt that the very evident interest my father took in her was but reasonably likely to leave substantial evidences behind.

There is something strikingly coherent in the little attentions of such *quasi* young persons to an old one, when their sole and becoming occupation leads to their becoming the sole heir. Nor were these speculations that had not, at times, entered into the head of Arabella Chilly. But I should not say that my father had at all guile sufficient for the occasion. He only knew that Miss Chilly was always at his side; that she was a monstrous fine woman; that she brought him much comfort; that her bust was in much request by every sculptor, and that she did not quarrel with his cook. Beyond this my father believed that she had the mind and the heart to administer

aright the fortune he had it in his heart to leave her.

When my father, without any consultation with Miss Chilly—a freedom which she poutingly resented by tearfully declaring that she felt “quite hurt”—announced to that young lady that her administration of affairs was likely to have an end, it is not probable that the prevailing feeling in the breast of Miss Chilly towards my father’s selection was one of undivided love. It would be indeed unjust to Miss Chilly were it not said, without reserve, that upon the occasion she felt in every way a very woman. But whilst not the heartiest of her affections were devoted to the interloper, she reasoned much within herself whether she had done wisely and well in refusing the very honourable offers of Mr. McGrab; until, in truth, that gentleman was well-nigh wearied with repeating the question. She was quite prepared to be critical towards Mrs. Trevor, but was she yet quite prepared to be conciliatory towards Mr. McGrab?

Whether that which followed assisted her materially in the solution of the difficulty—for it never once entered into her head to doubt that Mr. McGrab would ask the one question that indeed he asked every day—I am not prepared to say; but under the acacia-tree, where they had so often met, Mr. McGrab, with an interrogatory on his lips that he knew by heart, was waiting for his idol.

Much of that lady’s character was apt to develop itself in a sort of coyness of maturer years; and that evening was Mr. McGrab led on by an unusual

attitude on her part, to ask again a question that had been so often answered one way. So she waited for him in the full heat of his coming around the acacia-tree, and kissed her hand in a manner that made him perfectly giddy. He was soon doing all he knew; but, truth to say, she, with much tact, kept the tree between her and the exhausted figure. Mr. McGrab, in his warmth, waited until, by a masterly double on his part, he had brought Miss Chilly to terms.

Now, Miss Chilly—who was in no way under the law of minors, and whose heart, in the main, was set on marriage—gave Mr. McGrab to understand that, in short, he was received in mercy to his loneliness.

I believe I shall have summed up this part of my history, when I say that the lady who was to have received a fortune that would have been much coveted, was left an annuity that was not contemptible.

But—I am unwillingly reminded that I am writing history; would that I could turn aside to fiction when my evidence is not agreeable—the second wife of Charles Trevor was not welcomed as she might have been by Arabella McGrab had not the first wife of Mr. McGrab been a woman.

Now, Mrs. Trevor made allowances. Not those allowances which, amongst women, are well known to mean the gratification of feeling “very superior.” But she felt that Mrs. McGrab, who had been all but lost to Mr. McGrab’s wooing, must be very gently won. After a while, very satisfactory was the intimacy which grew up. Mrs. McGrab was friendly just so far as that she did not hate

aloud, and was confidential to the extent of confiding nothing that was confidential; still the families behaved as many families do that understand one another.

When Mrs. Trevor's first boy was born, Mrs. McGrab could not be said to have been herself for many weeks, mainly on account of the sex of the child. Had the little one been a girl, much of that which had gone from her might have yet in part returned. But my poor mother, who could see none of these things—things, too, which were very plain—had left nothing undone to remove the gathering violence of Mrs. McGrab's indignation, and the first invitation to dinner was accepted, as has been seen, at a moment when there was even danger in the sacrifice.

My mother was taken ill before the great procession of courses was half-exhausted. It was "very, very kind of her to have come," said Mrs. McGrab, in a tone that was half-music, half not—who was in a distressing perspiration over the chances of a boy or a girl; and who was powerfully agitated at the thought whether or not another remove was to separate her from that great and goodly sum which stood in her patron's name in the Consolidated Bank Annuities. Mrs. Trevor assured her, as the carriage was announced, that she would be none the worse for what she had gone through. This reiterated reference to what she had undergone, suggesting, perhaps, whether it bore literally or not on Mrs. McGrab's very liberal entertainment.

Mrs. McGrab, undoubtedly, felt as a displaced woman would feel when she heard of the Trevors'

carriage—that carriage which she had so gorgeously decorated after her own fancy, with a very direct view to the contingencies of the future. Nor was her irritation at all abated at the recollection of Mr. McGrab's unfeelingly-expressed inability that very morning to go to the expense of a wheelbarrow for his villa garden.

My mother did well; and my father, who had heard the cry—which once heard is never forgotten—with a heavy damp upon his forehead, had raised a wild and frenzied prayer for the wife in her agony, and the daughter or the man-child who was then unborn. As he so prayed, the voice of the child of his own loins that he had never yet seen, broke upon his ear, and Harvey Mountaigne, with a bright eye which said that all was doing well, spoke to my father of a “splendid boy;” and my father clasped the hand that was never false, and thanked his God—and I bow my head, for he blessed me—as he blessed his second son.

There was no dawn in the sky when Harvey Mountaigne left the old gray Grange. Mr. Trevor had urged him to take a horse, and the good doctor, at a brisk trot, was soon passing through the town near which he lived.

His way lay by the workhouse, and very close to the workhouse door. The wind blew piercingly, and he drew his cloak the closer round him as he felt the chill. He was passing the pauper's gate, when he fancied the moaning of the wind was strangely like a hollow groan. He checked his impatient horse and listened, and whatever he heard was now less indistinctly repeated. Harvey Moun-

taigne was not the man, whether the wind blew east or west, to leave a doubt that might concern a human being, unexplained ; and he leaped from his horse and led it up towards the door.

Just within the gate, where, if it did not freeze, it did not thaw, a woman, strangely pale and beautiful, lay with no pillow but the parish flags. Harvey Mountaigne gently knelt and raised her head, and the movement of the lips of that ghastly face were the first signs that it was not a corpse which lay at that workhouse door. The glazed eyes opened wildly, and looked with a long earnest look in their rich beauty full upon him ; and again groan followed groan, the groan that spoke in its great depths of the throes that were to give life to another, and give up a life, perhaps, in the giving. Harvey Mountaigne knew that the woman before him lay in her pangs in the eye of the east wind at that workhouse door. Again the ashy lips were mute, the struggle was nearing to its end, and whilst the child had come to the birth, there was not strength to bring forth. In an instant the doctor knelt, half stripped, by her side, and all that was susceptible of warmth was tenderly wrapped round the still body of that lovely girl. This done, Harvey Mountaigne moistened the open lips with brandy, and, by degrees, the sunken eyes more kindly opened, and she eagerly drank of the reviving stimulant.

“Where am I?” said the girl, with an effort that the doctor in vain endeavoured to repress, grasping the good Mountaigne’s supporting arm. “You will not leave me, Geoffrey — will you

now?" Had Geoffrey been there, whoever he might be, and had Geoffrey been a man and not a devil, he would have stayed through an eternity by that girl's side. As she opened her eyes, and consciousness returned, the startled smile of trustfulness that had just dawned left her face, for she felt that whilst she had slept alone, she had awakened to find strangers.

She was soon in the good doctor's arms, and as he hurriedly carried her through the door that had been roughly opened, she whom he carried was a mother; and the little one was crying to the parish in the arms of the parish officer.

"My poor girl," said the doctor, as he laid her exhausted in a bed, "you may do well yet;" and at the sound of his genial voice, the girl opened her soft lustrous eyes, and gave him her thin, white hand, whereon there certainly was no wedding ring; but Harvey Mountaigne, who had never yet by baby lips been called a father, knelt by the bedside of the girl as though she were his own, and he gently placed his finger on her lips when she fain would have spoken in her great thankfulness, staying there until she slept, and waiting there until she woke.

It was eight o'clock and past, when she turned her eyes again upon him, with a warm and balmy smile.

"Tell me who you are," she said, as she threw her thin arms around his neck, and her hot tears fell upon a face that my father rightly said was worth a fortune in a sick-room. "Where am I, and who are you? Is it very wrong for me to love you?" Now Harvey Mountaigne did not

think it was, but he would not just then let her speak; and having seen her drink a pint of tea, went home for that which the workhouse stores could not so well provide.

Within an hour he had returned with such things in a jug—which he carried under his arm—as he knew would be for her well-doing, and which he stayed to see her take. He then left, to make better arrangements for her reception elsewhere, as soon as was expedient; and Harvey Mountaigne crossed the threshold of that pauper's house where death had been so nearly crowned where life began.



CHAPTER II.

EVELYN MERVYN.

It would have been a matter of no little difficulty some years before this history begins to have known Glastonbury, and its indwellers, without knowing Farmer Mervyn. Indeed, it is quite probable that the first and prevailing impression of the stranger on entering into those parts, would have been that Farmer Mervyn was ubiquitous; whilst it would have been as undeniably evident, that his character and influence were as much above depreciation as the fatted beasts that took off the medals with monotonous regularity at Christmas-time.

It would not be in the least credible, were I to

say that amongst those who knew him best, there were no tongues that could witness falsely; for I am in no wise certain that Stephen Mervyn lived in any exceptional sphere.

Glastonbury, so far as I know, is neither better nor worse than any other communities; it would at times say evil with much heartiness where it could, and where it could not, Glastonbury was disciplined with the discipline of years, to make a virtue of the necessity of saying nothing. For a long time, whilst those around him were burying their dead, Stephen Mervyn knew not what it was to see death sitting at his own hearth; but its dark presence one May day stood with lifted finger face to face with him at his own door, and Stephen Mervyn, while he sorrowed none the less, thanked his God that the child of the dear dead one was left.

As months rolled on, and another May came round, so desirable in every way was the widower held to be, that it was much marvelled at in Glastonbury that no second mother was chosen out of the many ones that offered for the farmer's only child.

It would have been strange had he heard nothing of all the demonstrative interest with which others viewed his present state. But it was now clear that the neighbourhood thought too much of the farmer, and knew too little of the man.

Stephen Mervyn was a great deal too tenderly and too truly the father, to think of any such compromise between his own convenience and his little one's happiness, as was suggested to him by

those who were inclined to give advice to every one. Nor did he care to be unfaithful to the memory of her in whose image the blue-eyed child about him daily grew. But—as amongst all orders and degrees of women—the ladies of Glastonbury took abundant care that the interests of the good father were in no way prejudiced; and if there was no inclination on his part to take to himself such a second partner as they could well and affectionately recommend from among themselves, it was at least necessary that one undivided effort should be made to save what was so humanely known as the “dear child.”

Now, Stephen Mervyn had but one child born to him, and when the little nestling crept on to his knee for its kiss when bed-time came round, the good farmer, who had heard much in his day of those schools where great inducements are held out in prospectuses for great considerations, he would—let me hope only after the manner of farmers who could well know no better—kiss the sweet lips that would lisp of a future which he alone was to share, and feel that, God helping him, *she* should at least escape the pollution of a school. “Pollution” might have been, or it might not, a stronger word than the occasion and the disease warranted; but when Farmer Mervyn’s spinster sister came to live with him, the ladies of Glastonbury, who were much cumbered about what they called the prospects of the child, talked the matter over really as though it very much concerned themselves, and laid out many little plans whereby it was believed that Evelyn Mervyn might be got into “the groove.”

One lady went so far as to leave a tinted prospectus of a *pension* in the Pyrences that personally she could highly recommend, and out of which nothing but good had been known to come. Another, in her research and experience, could introduce the farmer to a lady in the neighbourhood, who had just resolved to open her house for "the reception of a limited number of the daughters of noblemen and gentlemen," and whom she even believed could be persuaded unreservedly to open up these privileges to Miss Mervyn.

And yet another would receive her as into "her own home," where she would be instructed, moreover, in the "true principles of the Protestant religion." In this case the reference was made, by permission, to the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie, the rector of Great Glastonbury, and younger brother of a Whig earl, and professor of what had been well ascertained to be the defined principles of Protestantism at the "home" in question.

But Stephen Mervyn, with much purpose, most unaccountably set himself against all these schools. He was not after any sort a received disciple of the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie; and, moreover, he disbelieved generally in young ladies' schools, more especially in those where it was seriously pretended that what was essentially worldly could be religious; that where the artificial was so sumptuous, nature could be supreme; and that what was so essentially a speculation, could be by any accident a "home."

In this grave matter Stephen Mervyn called up

many hardmouthed judges, and was reputed by the common voice of Glastonbury to be rude;—a rumour probably with as much bottom as the generality of rumours, though founded, I have some reason to believe, upon the garbled report of a very delicate interview that was forced upon him by a lady who came unrebuked, with testimonials from the Ladies' Committee of the Spinal Hospital, and who intruded, moreover, armed with dumbbells of various sizes, and other such instruments, which are of the nature of "extras." In proof of their effectiveness, it was unhesitatingly declared that they alone could stand between his child and that certain deformity which she proceeded first to fancy, and then to describe. In the case of that muscular lady professor, I have reason to apprehend Stephen Mervyn so far believed his daughter to be straight, and likely to remain so, that he called in his sister to expel the professor and her tricks.

So in the end it came to pass that Evelyn Mervyn had none of those advantages upon which we set such a price, and for which we sacrifice so much, and at the age of thirteen was, comparatively speaking, without any of those "dear friends" which young girls of her years can generally ask to tea in any number.

Stephen Mervyn had very clearly not outlived the memory of his wife; and after a ten years' widowhood, there was—so his neighbours said—no getting him to move on.

Stephen Mervyn lived, and had ever lived, since he first grew wheat and fattened beasts on his own account, in the ivy-covered cottage that

stood with a legend and a fishpond, on the border of my father's estate ; and here none of the outlying refinements so dear to Glastonbury ever reached him or his. He stood without the circle that pressed so much, and to so little purpose, upon him. He was even uncouth enough to assert that he did not desire their advice for himself, or their interest for his child ; and if—as he would say when he smoothed the golden hair of his little one—"she is like her mother, and knows as much and no more, she will be worth the fetching away, and I don't care who hears me say so."

So Evelyn Mervyn was destined to know no more than her aunt ; and the neighbours would have it, more especially those ladies who had still vacancies at the next half-quarter, that whilst that was very little, there were aspects in which it was certainly too much.

Now, whilst Glastonbury was thus busied with the affairs of the agriculturist, truth to tell, Evelyn Mervyn bore no evidences of any school. She knew what she needed to know, and she knew no more. An immodest word she had never heard, and if she owed that excessive ignorance to her home education, her girlish innocence, her faultless figure, and her lovely face found no sort of equal in any one of the many excellent schools that provided whatever you wanted at whatever figure you pleased.

It was some few weeks after Stephen Mervyn had finally declined the many advantages which were offered to his daughter, that the mind of Glastonbury was much gratified in fancying that

it had found out the prevailing cause. A lady had called with testimonials that occupied a sheet of tinted letter-paper, and with the very highest and most affecting references to pious parents, to say that she was educating "two dear girls of her own," and that she was anxious, for "dear Evelyn's" sake, to make her the third. It was very clear, by her own account, that she incessantly sacrificed herself as a part of the scheme for her dear charges, and indeed superintended the religious department and the deportment herself. Whereupon Stephen Mervyn, who had had more than enough of these importunities from women who had grown thin, by their own account, in busying themselves with his affairs, rang the bell, and bade the servant tell Miss Evelyn that he wished her presence in the parlour. When she entered, and stood by his knee, with her soft eyes looking searchingly into his bluff, bronzed face, as though she would know the one secret of him, from whom she had had none, he gazed upon her with all the fulness of his mighty love, and said with rapture, speaking in his father's pride, "My dear madam, would you ask me to spoil *her*?"

It was indeed the first time that Farmer Mervyn had so spoken to such a woman. The lady who had been so anxious to make the resources of her home comprehensive, had in the end to solace herself as best she could, with two other dear girls, at a high rate, whose fathers fancied, from the charges, that it was not unremunerative after this fashion to improvise a home; and Evelyn Mervyn was so much blessed above those who were her neighbours, that she

hardly ever knew temptation, for she had never known a school.

A few months later, Glastonbury was congratulating itself that through many speculations, it had at last come to know the reason why. Evelyn Mervyn had lost her aunt perhaps some twelve months, and was fast merging into her fifteenth year, when Farmer Mervyn's cattle were stricken and died, every head of them, of a sore disease. A ruinous harvest followed upon this; and again another came, that left him hopelessly a ruined man.

Stephen Mervyn in all the years that he could look back on, had never known but that one great rending sorrow which overtook him when his wife died sleeping in his arms; and he knew not well how to look this ripe affliction in the face. He took it much to heart, and nursed his grief, and his very grief, like that which the world will nurse, turned on him; so, when the days were getting near to winter, Stephen Mervyn died.

Evelyn looked on him as he lay in death, and knowing not its cold coming, held her breath, and feared that every footfall should hurry his awakening from that seeming sleep. When it was known that Stephen Mervyn was dead, and how he died, many who thought that they knew, said it was because of his poverty that Evelyn had never been to school. But when the farmer was buried out of sight, none who had been so violently-affectioned to the "dear child" for the dear child's sake, came near her in her first great grief; and on the day of the funeral, when my

father called to offer her a home, he found Evelyn Mervyn had already calculated the chances, and chosen her own lot.

It was only until such plans as she had formed could be matured, that she accepted my father's offer of a temporary residence at the old Grange.

Evelyn had made resolutions over her father's clay that she would owe her daily bread to no medium here but the labour of her own hands. She was cunning, too, with her needle; she could, moreover, had she been so minded, have taught better than many who had superlative qualifications for teaching; but with her father's memory, her only trust, it did not enter into the heart of his child in those early days, to create for herself an occupation which she could not follow unless she could forget his grave.

So Evelyn at times wrestled much, and her own heart got the last fall; and one afternoon she left the cottage with the lightest heart that she could summon, to take counsel of the rector.

The rector received her with one of those elaborate blessings that he was accustomed to attribute to him whose name he bore. Indeed, the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie was much and visibly affected towards the orphan who had sought his advice; and the orphan, who by the educational temptations that had been wisely kept from her, had grown up into womanhood without guile, heard what he had to say without suspicion.

He then, too, in his turn, became the listener, and delivered himself of a hope that by the "aid of Providence," she would remain in *that* path

which he did not specify, but from which it was enough for her to know that he had in his melancholy experience known certain women of fancied excellent report to wander. He assured her that she might command him at all seasons, and dismissed her with that free translation of the original Calvin benediction, in which the manual effort amongst her golden hair altogether superseded the effect of his words. Indeed, Evelyn was inclined to think his hands had already remained on her head much longer than was necessary for the realization even of all the abundance of grace that he invoked.

There is no saying to what further extent the original text of Calvin might have been introduced, had not Mr. Slie been suddenly called away to move a resolution against "Tractarian Innovations" and "Ritualistic Revivals" at the Town Hall.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOX ON THE STAGE.

EVELYN MERVYN was not so sorry as she might have been to be rid of the pious caresses of Mr. Slie, and to feel that she was once again left to the direction of her own thoughts. Within the week, however, that gentleman, as good as his word—which, in that particular instance, was better than it often was,—introduced her as “his dear young friend” to a wholesale establishment at Glastonbury, where he assured her the acting superintendent was not only of thorough “Evangelical principles,” but would be as entirely a mother to her as she was to the other sixteen young ladies under her roof. This motherly distribution of that lady into sixteen parts must not be taken to signify too much. I do not say that this maternal undertaking was not, on the whole, very strictly fulfilled; for, inasmuch as the “Evangelical” superintendent had neither borne those sixteen young women, nor any part of them, nor cared for them beyond what she got from their hire, it was not a particularly strict obligation to be as entirely a mother to Evelyn Mervyn.

The understanding and the undertaking were that Miss Mervyn was, in consideration of her making shirts, to receive a progressive equivalent, commencing at the very liberal rate of eightpence

per shirt; a very handsome arrangement, as the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie observed—quoting those scriptures that were pertinent to the orphan being as well cared for as the young ravens,—and allowing comforts, as he remarked, but very wisely not contemplating luxuries.

At the end of a month, Evelyn Mervyn, with all that her improvised mother did for her, looked pale and thin. At the end of the first quarter, she had a cough, which, the good lady in charge remarked, showed that there was really no accounting for how a cough could come, marvelling much to the haggard girl that such things could be where, by her indulgence, the hours were only eight to ten.

When she had made shirts at that rate, without a rise, for six months, Evelyn Mervyn's hollow cough was a terrible accompaniment to Hood's terrible song. Without consulting either her liberal employer or the excellent rector, she determined to give notice of her intention to leave, which, with much pertinacity, she carried into effect the very next morning.

The head of the establishment, who was much overcome—for Evelyn Mervyn was cheap at the price,—said nothing; but it is often a fearful thing when even a woman says nothing. The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie, always demonstrative, called her "his poor, dear, wayward child," blessed her with the one inevitable blessing, laying, as he had done before, much stress on her golden hair.

He was sorry, he said, for her own sake, to hear that she had, without any sufficient cause,

left an estimable lady, for the soundness of whose Christian principles he would himself be guarantee.

Now, Evelyn Mervyn was not sorry, nor, indeed, was she very sad. She had learned something in the six months that she had spent amongst the shirts; and, besides, among what she had learnt, there was something of an insight into the character of the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie. So she determined this time to consult no one but herself, and with some few shillings in her purse that she had saved from her hire, she set out on that very matter-of-fact speculation—the business of life, into the unsympathizing streets of Glastonbury.

She had not gone far when a paroxysm of coughing compelled her to stop; and as she leaned exhausted against a door, a large placard arrested her attention in a shop-window, and Evelyn stayed awhile to read it.

It announced, in very large capitals, that a Thespian revival was imminent, and that the theatre, so long closed, was to be opened under such distinguished patronage as was conspicuously set forth, the next week, in Glastonbury. But beyond this appeal to that patronage, which seemed to have decided the manager into becoming a lessee, what more particularly arrested her attention was the announcement at the foot that a lady was wanted to play the chief *soubrette*, and that any one possessing the necessary qualifications, which were not very exacting, might invest them in his national establishment for a very liberal equivalent.

Now, it so chanced that Evelyn knew that her father had once known something of the manager, and though her aunt had certainly, during the development of her education, omitted in any way to mention, much less describe, a *soubrette*, Evelyn fancied that if it was nothing very wrong, there was no reason why she should not know something about it.

So she mustered up all her resolution, which, during her struggles over linen, had very much increased, and with that artlessness which her poor father had been so much exhorted to have dealt with at a finishing school, told the manager, who received her with none of the offensive familiarity of Mr. Slie, that she could not very well undertake the *soubrette* until he was good enough to tell her what a *soubrette* might be.

Now, the manager was not only a man with a kindly sympathizing heart, but he had once known, and had not forgotten, Farmer Mervyn ; and, perhaps, beyond this, the golden hair, and the lovely face, and the figure, that had had none of the advantages of a "course of deportment," confirmed what his easy nature had almost from the first decided ; so, there and then, Evelyn was engaged for three months as the *soubrette*, with one benefit in the height of the season.

Whilst all this was coming to a crisis in the manager's room, a deputation of the ladies of Glastonbury had been brought up in a hack cab, to wait upon the rector, and to urge upon him the necessity of taking such extreme steps as he might approve to arrest the arrangements in progress at the theatre, before, as the leading and

descriptive virgin of the deputation remarked, "the wrath of Providence was gathered up against them."

The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie, after offering up, at very particular request, a prayer against the stage in general, and that theatre in particular, became for a season practical, and said, with a shudder of apprehension, that he was afraid his power in this matter had its limits, and that he could, at most, only exhort his flock to avoid this grave pollution.

On being much and affectionately pressed, he said it would give him pleasure to preach against the evil upon Sunday week, though, in the end, he questioned whether the opening of a godless house might not be looked upon as a judgment, and, in that light, be accepted in the place of one more overwhelming.

Now, as we may be sure, it was not very long before Glastonbury knew the step in life that Evelyn Mervyn had taken for herself; and again the subscription fly was ordered round, and the excellent ladies of Glastonbury, in a deputation of four, called on the rector, to urge his renewed interference.

"My dear Christian friends," he said, "what would you have me do?" Now, one of the four, Miss Tabitha Todhunter, who was a sort of walking commentary on the vexed points of Scripture history, said "that there were many precedents for reverend mouths to curse such a building as a theatre, and such abominations as stage-players." Things after this got naturally worse, and scandalized the more devout, when it was known that the

Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie had sought out Evelyn Mervyn, rumour asserting that she would not see him.

My father, who was never, I believe, privileged to be included amongst the religionists of Glastonbury, felt for the utter friendlessness of the girl, and pointed out to her affectionately the many temptations of the career she had chosen; and without any of those anathemas against a profession that, degrade it as we may, is full of honour, offered her again, from his heart, a free home beneath his roof, which Evelyn Mervyn—who disbelieved in that vice which she had never seen, as she believed in that virtue which she herself enshrined—declined, with her soft blue eyes full of that unbidden dew which came from the fount of her own trusting heart.

It was soon very certain that, whether or not, Evelyn Mervyn was a great actress, she drew great houses; and when her benefit came to be announced—on which occasion she was to appear to Glastonbury as Luey, in the “*Rivals*”—it did not want much persuasion from the manager to induce her to add a dance, that she had long been learning, to the bill.

This was very naturally much too much for Glastonbury to bear. Again was the rector entertaining, very much to his inconvenience, a deputation, to consider the enormity of the situation that was forced upon the town. After this, when the excitement of the occasion aggravated both thirst and enthusiasm, it was not difficult to induce those ladies to take off their shawls and stay to tea and prayers. The opportunity was in every

way a special one, for, after much discussion, a distinctive course of action was determined on.

The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie—as Miss Todhunter, the great Scripture commentator amongst those ladies suggested—was to go to the root of the abomination itself, and strike a pulpit blow at dancing. Not that it had not been proved that Shakspeare was in torture, and that Garrick was accursed, but dancing was felt to have been more directly and emphatically reprovcd. There was the daughter of Herodias as a case in point. “We have here clearly a parallel,” the rector replied, “whether she wore muslin or not;” and the great moral deduced from this was that, whereas the daughter of Herodias had clearly danced to such a purpose as to induce the king to make oath rashly, the prevailing effect of dancing was, at all times, to lead men on with all their passions much inflamed, to promise with an oath to give to dancing-women anything for which those dancing-women cared to ask.

This undoubted blow at Terpsichore was struck from the pulpit with affectionate earnestness the very next Sunday. But with all this the night of the benefit came, and no avenging plague had come. The house was crammed, and when the curtain fell, the ovation was complete. Beyond this, Evelyn—who was “Mademoiselle Mervin”—was led before the footlights to crown a success that was never once doubtful.

Now, the members of the deputation that had so prevailed over the rector were even seated in one row within that guilty pile. They had come, they said, when they thought the time arrived for

an explanation, to see the "painted hussey," and ascertain whether they could shame her. Certainly when the curtain fell on Evelyn, the four missionaries in the stalls seemed to have been hardly successful.

But what had been was nothing to what was to come. The curtain rose upon the moonlight scene, where Evelyn, according to the bill, was to dance; and whilst some one said that the Hon. and Reverend Calvin Slie was seen—not with his hands clasped as he clearly should have been—in the back of a box, the religionists had got out their fans, that in the case of there being any cause of offence, they need not be offended.

It must have been remarked that night—for it was too evident to escape the observation of an audience the greater part of which had come together for such criticism—that whilst Evelyn Mervyn was the centre of admiration, the strange gentleman in the box on the stage, who had been there in that box so often, and whose name—though so many would have given much to learn it—no one ever knew, was redoubling all his marked attentions.

Nor was this in the moment of her triumph unseen or unfelt by Evelyn Mervyn. She came through her great trial, and carried her audience with her; but when the stranger in the stage-box flung her a magnificent bouquet, the poor girl who had never seen an offering such as that at her feet before, trembled violently, and those who were near her, and could see her agitation, said they saw a tear.

But she was to be still further tried. When

she stooped to pick it up, a note fell from a damask rose on to the stage; and as the local prints the next day had it, there was thereupon a very great sensation. With the burning blood crimsoning her lovely face, and her eyes flashing bright flashes of indignant fire, she flung the flowers aside, and running to the footlights, threw herself sobbing on her knees, and prayed of the audience to save her from such cruel insult.

This was naturally a great matter for the interference of those who hardly knew wherefore they were called upon to interfere, and there was soon every appearance of a serious disturbance.

As the hissing and hooting rose to a pitch that brought on the manager in his own interests, "Serve her right," was the grateful offering to the clamour, of one of the very religious deputation who saw all from behind her fan, and who could yet ride off on the belief that she had seen nothing.

As the manager was to little or no purpose exercising his authority to restore order, the stranger rose from his seat, and came to the front of the box by the stage, and motioning that he wished to speak, was first met with the traditional cries of "Turn him out," and "Shame, shame!" and then after the manner of all gatherings of all people, was tolerated for what he had to say.

"Sir," he said, addressing the manager in a voice that was distinctly heard in every corner of the house; "I may have acted to myself injudiciously, and to that lady prejudicially, but there is not a man in this theatre, or in this town, to whom I will yield in devoted respect to Miss

Mervyn. Hear me," he said, the swelling tones of his rich voice bringing the audience to his feet—turning full to the people, and to my father in particular—"I cannot dispute the soundness of your judgment, whilst I may deny its sincerity; I have to beg that Mr. Trevor will open this letter in the presence of you all. I owe it to that lady whom I can only honour, and to myself whom I would not dishonour, that my devotion to her, so accidentally made public, shall be no reproach to me, and no shame to her, whom, sir, I would call my lawful wife. Read, Mr. Trevor, read."

What the strange man from that box on the stage had declared, was truly enough all true—it was signed G. M.; and from that night Evelyn Mervyn was never seen again in the little theatre at Glastonbury.

It was perhaps a year or more before Glastonbury could well be said to have known where she was gone, and then it perhaps was scarcely worth knowing.

She had borne a baby at the workhouse door, as in this history has been seen; and the only commentary on the little note in the little theatre that was ever admitted to proof was, that on her finger there was no authority by which the mother dared to ask a charitable world to look upon her child.

It is, I believe, quite true, that certain very charitable folk in Glastonbury, who came to conclusions in such matters, went so far as to suggest, in their benevolence, that the ring might well have been "pawned, or forgotten, or"

But the ladies of Glastonbury, under such circumstances, would lend their ears to nothing more; and Evelyn, when she in the workhouse heard how sorely judgment went against her, clasped her pale, thin hands, and grasping for proof of her innocence, felt that her very fingers lent their witness to her guilt.

“Geoffrey, Geoffrey!” she cried, in her full agony, “save me from this cruel shame.”

But Geoffrey, though thus bidden, did not come, and the ladies of Glastonbury in their much charity were left to think that the woman who had forgotten her ring, might very well indeed have forgotten herself.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH MRS. DUBBELFAISE BY REQUEST CASTS THE
FIRST STONE.

IN all this there was doubtless an irresistible opportunity offered to Mr. Slie's congregation to manifest the resources of their earnest charity.

If there be one moral prominence of an age that talks of nothing but its belief in self-denial, and does nothing but make money, more remarkable than any other, it is emphatically to be found in its airy forms of varied charity. Indeed, to such an area has it reached, and to such an extent has this faith possessed me, that I may very well be anxious lest from ignorance of its beauties I may accidentally underrate that which I confess I cannot understand. The sort of charity that just then was demanded at the benevolent hands of Glastonbury, was a wholly distinct thing from that pleasant and assuring benevolence which in less demonstrative days we were exhorted to carry out in a corner. It was not of the nature of almsgiving. The right hand and the left had in such matters established those confidential communications against which we are warned; and the very giving of alms has in some manner been translated from its very early humbleness in the corner—where it was unapplauded—to the newspaper column, where it may be with much-acquired

diffidence proclaimed. The demand was for that charity which "thinketh no evil"—the copyright of which has not descended to these times—which can see the wife without the ring; and at the exact moment the trying call was made, Glastonbury had hardly prepared itself to make the concession.

There is, amongst other evidences of an advanced excellency, a sort of inexorable Samaritan feeling abroad—which from its native buoyancy needs but vastly little extraneous support—that where you may know any particular moral obligation to be absolutely wanting, you should at once fervently proclaim a belief in its existence. It in no way matters anything how much ascertained evil you may know of, so long as you dwell pathetically upon that measure of benevolence which you know to be fictitious. This amongst the more popular philanthropists of the day, is pleasantly called "Seeking out the bright side." Fervent charity of this sort is not difficult to meet with in a society which, while it owes all that in such charity is popular to the betrayal of that which is sincere, is congratulating itself with much seeming spiritual earnestness from the pulpit and the platform, on the display of a feature that had its first reproof from charity itself, and its first foundation amongst devils.

The lying-in girl as she took the barley to her mouth, and her baby to her breast, felt that the charity she had read of in *that* Book by her bedside, was hardly the same thing as that which was now brought to bear in so many forms upon herself. It had come to her as she lay on that

parish flock, that there was, to say the least of it, very considerable suspicion as to the propriety of becoming a mother after such a fashion. No one, it is true, who said these things—things which to her were very hard to bear—came near enough the girl to judge; but then all that concerned her was pronounced by the common consent of “The committee of ladies upon chastity”—a great work of charity then in its early days—to be such as could gain nothing by sympathy and ventilation.

There was the most positive circumstantial evidence against her, which the rare susceptibility of Glastonbury could not overlook. There were, indeed, a great way apart, standing in benevolent and shy circles, those who were for not judging too harshly; but if the ring had been pawned, it would have been something of a stimulant to their charity to have seen the pawnbroker’s duplicate. They believed the girl with a large earnest faith, to be no better than she might well be; but in their conversation on so delicate a subject with Mr. Slie, it was mutually agreed that the girl *might* be, after all, an honest woman.

These very excellent people were, however, in a minority perfectly harmless for all action in such a community as Glastonbury. There were those who thought it fortunate, and said so, that the resources of the county penitentiary had been so providentially enlarged; that there were beds now equal to that demand, which was clearly a growing one; and such as these wondered in those public places, where their amazement would be sure to be infectious, whether the gentleman

who had so declared himself in that little note in the damask rose, from the stage-box, was, after all, the papa proper of the workhouse child. He was clearly, they believed, not a marrying man. These members of Mr. Slie's congregation, to do them justice, were altogether superior to the simulation of any charity at all in the matter. They believed—and it gave them much satisfaction to believe—that the rebuked mother was the lawful wife; but then it was no part of their creed to say so. As they said, after going into committee in the "Welsh Flannel Club," there *was* very clearly a doubt. "She had been such a sweet girl," and for "her dear mother's sake," they were willing to put on the most evident *faux pas* the most favourable construction; but this stood much in the way of their coming to such thoughts. There was no ring, and there was no believing that it had been pawned. On its production they were benevolently ready to believe, what no one then could well have dared to doubt; but they had taken some care to ascertain that there was no such sign by which the mother could stand side by side in the ranks of propriety with those leading Christians of Glastonbury.

They had not heard the Gospel for those many years from the lips of Mr. Slie for nothing. They had his assurance that in the matter of their salvation, their prospects were assuring and comfortable, and with them what they must eventually arrive at was but a question of time. It was clearly a case for an example. The virgins of Glastonbury felt so in this particular; there

was a strong feeling amongst them as to who should be the exponent of such a righteous condemnation; and they were much moved as to which of them all should cast the first stone.

Whilst the heap of stones was growing very large—for it was ultimately decided that each lady should cast one—things took a turn which lent a colour to the horrible belief, that the coming of babies might after this manner find sympathizers in such doubtful propriety.

Harvey Mountaigne had for some days had it on his mind that the workhouse was no place for that mother and child. He had come by degrees to that very questionable callousness which hesitates to condemn a human being in the absence of a ring; and on the tenth day after the birth of the child, his plans for the future took a more decided form.

My mother's health was not such as would permit of the free indulgence of my appetite, and Harvey Mountaigne was one of those who—rightly or wrongly—thought it better to lose the child than sacrifice the mother. But it was not in any way necessary that I should be lost.

It was clear, that however much my mother might regret it, she was in no state to nurse me. In this urgent matter she no more approved of a hired woman than do I, in a general way, or any of those excellent persons who, if they were never asked for anything beyond a theory, would be always in a position to give satisfaction.

Harvey Mountaigne knew that he could well rely upon my mother's good sense, and in the

end had but little trouble in bringing her round to his way of thinking. I believe I must have a great respect for all parochial institutions; so much so, that I entirely avoid them, lest by any accident I should fail to do them justice. How this respect was engendered may perhaps be thus explained.

On the tenth morning after my birth, and when my appetite had assumed proportions that it was apprehended might not be without effect on my mother's constitution, Mr. Mountaigne on his way from the Grange to the workhouse, felt that active measures could be no longer delayed without serious prejudice to my mother's well-being. As he entered the room where Evelyn lay, he heard her voice in passionate accents talking to her baby, and saw the beautiful mother with the sleeping child strained closely to her breast. Whilst he lingered at the door, for the scene was such as he had no heart to disturb, he saw the big hot tears on Evelyn's cheeks; and he would have left her till the gathering sorrow that so moved her was over, had not she heard his retreating step, and looking up, called on him with words of full-meaning entreaty not to go.

So summoned, Harvey Mountaigne sat down by her bedside, and taking her delicate hand—in which the full blue veins one and all declared their course—in his, felt the throb of the restless pulse, that told him a story sadder much than she could tell.

"My good girl," he said, "I must have no tears; you have very much to be thankful for, and I am the bearer of a message, that I know

you will be glad to hear; but indeed I must have no tears, or I shall begin to think you wish me gone."

Wish *him* gone! He who had come out of the big world that night when the east wind blew, had carried her in his own arms, and had stood by her comforting her ever since, warmer, she thought, as others began to feel it very right to grow more cold.

"I won't cry," she said, "at least only sometimes, when things I think of make me;" the tears which kept ebbing and flowing, at such a challenge coming afresh, making clean breaches over her best resolutions. "But I cannot help them when I look at *her*, and know what the world says; but do let me hear *you* say that you will never, never leave me."

As the girl clung in her entreaty to the good doctor's arm, the child on her breast opened its eyes, and the mother as she snatched it up, and pressed it to her, said, "I am quite sure baby looked at *you*."

Harvey Mountaigne saw what was meant, and took the child in his arms, whilst Evelyn, who in her joy felt that every one did not look upon her little one as the seed of sin, threw her arms round the doctor's neck, and smiling through those tears which Mr. Mountaigne did not just then care to stay, said with her whole heart in her trembling words, "You—will love *her*—won't you?"

As it was evident that this scene could not well be prolonged with any advantage to his patient's condition, it was as well that she took the kiss on the child's lips, with which he answered her as an

assurance that if the good doctor was tried he would not be found wanting; and Mr. Mountaigne at once proceeded to the direct purpose of his visit.

"I should like to say something before you begin," said the girl, her beautiful, anxious face alternately flushing and paling, for she had at last broken ground on a subject that was strangely near to her full, throbbing heart; and without at all waiting for the doctor's consent, she sat up in her bed, and looking him full in the face with her soft, lustrous eyes, said, "Do you know, sir, who *I* am?"

Now this was certainly not entirely a matter which Mr. Mountaigne—professionally or otherwise, had he been in a position to choose—would have chosen for that particular occasion. He had most reluctantly—for though of Glastonbury, he was not of its assemblies—been compelled to hear many of the very charitable surmises and insinuations of that stone-casting circle, which, as the congregation of such a man as Mr. Slie, might have been said to hold in its hands the moral destinies of so good a town.

The doctor, who had known Evelyn from her birth, and who could associate nothing but purity with her, had heard of what—with the proper flavour of exaggeration—once happened from the box on the stage, and with what exceeding and jealous suspicion the ladies of that community viewed the whole proceeding. He did not in the least believe that that which they thought was necessarily right—in this matter he was only one remove from a heretic—but he knew that so long

as Glastonbury recognized their judgment, whatever they did think would at once become law. As his charity was not at all the same thing as that, which was so much in use amongst Mr. Slie and his congregation—a charity which indeed began at many homes—Harvey Mountaigne had still further put himself beyond the pale of their good opinion, for he had not in the very least made up his mind to condemn the girl. He believed her wholly beyond the imputation of the trespass with which it was sought to blacken her name. He had indeed determined at one time, that there should be no more such pious slander got out of a ring, and that the girl's accusers should have but little cause for self-congratulation. But whilst Evelyn so remained his patient, he very rightly judged that that time had not yet come.

So whilst Mr. Slie's congregation had their say unrebuked, the good Mountaigne avoided the direct issue that the poor girl had in view, and said, "My dear Evelyn, whatever I have known of you has been to your honour; beyond that I am not made your judge, and more than that I do not care to know."

This was precisely the answer that Evelyn did not wish to have; so she said, looking calmly and stedfastly into his face of ever kindly comfort, "Tell me, oh, *do* tell me, dear, dear sir! do you think me guilty of this shame? Do you see in me a mother that cannot, dare not tell her child, 'I, darling, did not fall that you might be?' Do you think that the day can come when the world will stand between us, when the world will teach

her to hate me, when the cruel hiss will hush her love as she may dare to take upon her lips my name—the name of mother? I ask you,” she continued, throwing back the golden hair which hung about her shoulders, “can you believe in the face of such suspicion?—can you trust in what I cannot prove?—can I reach out my arms to you, and feel the substance of a friend? Can you look me here—here, in the face—and see the wife, without looking at that mocking finger—this finger, which hurls my witness back with scorn? Oh, speak! for see how I hang upon your words. Look at me, look at the little Evelyn whom you once could love, who used to sit upon your knee, and say, *is* she the wife—am I the wife that I declare I am, or am I what the hard, the cursing world has judged me? I can forgive you if you must suspect—if you feel you must—but no! no! *you* never can, *you* never will. I am your little Evelyn still—see how I am living for your words.”

It will have been discovered before now, or it will not be discovered at all, that Mr. Mountaigne was a man who deferred but little to public opinion; and whilst Mr. Slie’s congregation, with that satisfaction of conscience which it is not permitted to all congregations to enjoy, had furnished their sentence against the “unfortunate girl”—their “erring sister” had been the words, but, as implying some affinity, they were considered objectionable—the doctor of Glastonbury was content, so the ladies averred, to become a party to the imposition, and his answer was in every way such as brought assurance to the anxious girl.

"My dear Evelyn," he said, and this was the second time for many months that he had so called her by her Christian name, "were my judgment to depend on proof, I must necessarily doubt your sincerity; keep all that proof, dear girl, for those who ask it: before God, *I* do believe you pure—pure as you ever were."

"Oh! say *that* again," she said, hanging about his neck; "call me *your* Evelyn—say that *you* believe. I am so very happy, Mr. Mountaigne."

"And there is no reason why you should be otherwise, my sweet girl," said the doctor, smoothing her golden hair, with none of the attractively religious action of Mr. Slie, but with a real fondness, that that honourable and reverend gentleman had to very little purpose endeavoured to throw into his caress; "and you have every cause to be thankful," continued Mr. Mountaigne, "for through the characteristic kindness of Mrs. Trevor, I am able to announce to you this morning, that you can leave this cold, unsympathizing place at once, and that for the present, at least, her house may be your home."

Harvey Mountaigne had a way, which is certainly not common, of suppressing much that was true, when it was in any way to his advantage that the truth should be told; and the substitution of my mother's name for his own would, in that mixed society which assumes the judgment-seat in all such matters, very surely not be held to justify the means by the end. Certainly this was the case in a community as censoriously critical as that of Glastonbury.

"It is very kind of Mrs. Trevor," said Evelyn;

"but—but I do not wish to leave the workhouse."

"And why not, my good girl?" said the doctor, very anxiously, who was not now without apprehension of a break down in his favourite plan, and who fancied that the time had come when he might well exercise a little wholesome authority, but did not quite know how to begin.

Evelyn's lips quivered; she looked at her child asleep on her bosom, and in an unaccountable way burst into tears.

"I cannot leave my baby," she said, between her sobs, straining the sleeping child tighter to her breast than ever, and covering its little pouting lips with kisses.

"Evelyn," said the doctor, more gravely than he had yet spoken, "no one—you will believe me—asked you to give up your baby. Mrs. Trevor is not the woman to separate mother and child. Come, my dear girl, I must always see dry eyes, for indeed you have fallen among good friends."

Evelyn perhaps fancied her tears were very excusable, when she thought upon the questionable proximity of Mr. Slie's congregation, and recollected that that gentleman had been even described to her as one of her very excellent friends. But where there was so much charity as there was at Glastonbury, it was hardly necessary that there should be so much caution.

"You are not angry with me, Mr. Mountaigne, are you?" said Evelyn, burying her lovely face in the doctor's hands; "but *he* will come some day, indeed he will, for I know he never meant to leave me. And how he would despise and hate me, if he asked for his child, and she was not in

my arms. I am sure that Geoffrey would never love me any more."

Mr. Mountaigne, who was no very strict disciplinarian at any time, certainly did not think that in this matter it was absolutely necessary that he should be angry; but as Evelyn had spoken of this Geoffrey on a previous occasion, he thought he could well take the opportunity of delicately inquiring how far Geoffrey and her husband might be one.

Evelyn, who was very glad to have his confidence, would, with her whole heart, have told him all her history; but reserving that until such time as she could better undergo the exertion, he ascertained enough to satisfy him that the stranger who had flung those flowers from the box on the stage, on that night that every one remembered, was not only Evelyn's husband, but that she was the lawful wife of Geoffrey May.

Mr. Mountaigne then proceeded to tell her, that were it her wish, he thought she might well be removed to the hospital the next day, and that at the end of a fortnight Mrs. Trevor had desired him to express the pleasure it would give them at the Grange to receive her as one of the family—this receiving into the family having no sort of connection with that affectionate and considerate inducement which in some such words is held out at many schools.

Now, Mr. Mountaigne had told Evelyn, on other occasions, that Mrs. Trevor's baby had an appetite wholly beyond Mrs. Trevor's means; and Evelyn had long had her own plans in relation to the matter, which now seemed not unlikely to be carried out.

“Do you think Mrs. Trevor would let *me* nurse her baby?” said Evelyn earnestly, but very timidly; and there well might be some such anxiety in the way she questioned, for it had reached her—as it was intended it should reach her—that whilst certain of Mr. Slie’s congregation had been sitting in judgment upon her, a belief of much Christian love had been expressed, “That it was no wonder there was so much sin in the streets, when the milk of such as her was for ever upon sale.”

“I am very strong,” she continued, “and can nurse them both quite well.”

Now Mr. Mountaigne ordinarily was no contriver, inasmuch as he left that to others, all orders and degrees of contriving having reached to a very considerable perfection in Glastonbury; and as this was pretty much the only thing he was ever known to have contrived, the good doctor began exultingly to fancy that if he took to it regularly, his success would be unequivocal.

Seeing that Evelyn’s offer was hearty and sincere, all was soon arranged, and Mr. Mountaigne took his leave, to communicate to my mother the first result of his contriving.

The more active and sensitive pew-holders of Mr. Slie’s congregation, rather in anticipation of the proper time, came to hear of all these things. The interference of Mr. Mountaigne in the matter of the hospital gave a stimulus to systems that were somewhat shocked, and brought affairs to a crisis.

The ladies’ committee, which was generally the moving committee of that excellent institution, met to agree upon a plan of operations, and issued

notices to the friends of the charity announcing a general meeting to protest against the reception into a charity—that specially provided against such a contingency—of a “notoriously unmarried woman.” Such a rule was one of the standing provisions, and it was clearly no reason because the doctor might “have cause to interest himself,” as Mrs. Dubbelfaise observed with much significance, “in a case that perhaps concerned himself,” why a charity endowed for a very different purpose should become “a refuge for the *protégées* of married men.”

This portrait of poor Evelyn—in brisk circulation at all the more charitable corners—was from the pen of Mrs. Dubbelfaise, the prime mover not only in all such little bits of moral caution, but in this particular instance the absolute propounder of the protest.

The indignation meeting—entirely confined to the ladies—was convened for eight o’clock P.M., and at that hour, from the large attendance of ladies at the door of the committee-room, it was evident, as well as from the anxious impatience of those assembled, that the meeting had not only met to wipe out a stain upon their own character, but that it was prepared to push its moral courage to the utmost, and carry the strongest resolutions.

A few minutes after eight, Mrs. Dubbelfaise’s little steps were heard, and having delivered herself of those spasmodic noises from the throat with which she latterly invariably entered a room—and which might have been owing to the prevailing influence of a vulgar governess, or have meant pleasure at being so surrounded, or distress

at the necessity of such a meeting—she proceeded to the real business of the evening, and was very cordially received.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise had been, as she said, “by the will of Providence,” left a widow with a little boy, at an age which left her necessarily open to very considerable temptation. Her complexion was generally considered dark, some even said thick, and those who were judges, and there were many so self-elected, said that she owed much to her fine eyes. They certainly were tolerably large, and they undoubtedly were serviceable as keys to her character. In any other society than that of Glastonbury, her mouth would have told a tale, and in that in which she moved, it had every opportunity of telling tales. Her hair, which was considered at one time to have contributed considerably to her fascination, owed something to a high comb, and everything to an excruciating neatness. From her figure, it was clear that even with those eyes, she would not have been eternized in a gallery of the fourth George. But then she would quote “her mamma” against all fulness of figure; and latterly this “mamma” had been a good deal brought forward in that sort of way.

Strangers were generally much charmed with her “sweetness of manner;” she was “a lovable thing,” was a very common impression; but whenever it came to pass that the opportunity offered for improving the acquaintance, they had never somehow known so sad a temper beneath so sweet a smile.

Then they were much infected with her perpetual adoration of her “darling boye,” nor did

they take more kindly to the perpetual intrusion of "mamma's opinion," or that belief in her infallibility which soon declared itself in a system of contradiction, or the eternal back step, which was the "darling boye's" ultimatum before he would ever go to sleep. Beyond this, a feeling grew that such ill-concealed contradiction was not always tolerable even from one who was so "very refined."

Of course Mrs. Dubbelfaise and her "boye" were not without their adherents; for such as she there is as yet no Siberia in modern society.

The business of the evening was carried through unanimously, and resolutions—being now a matter of the history of that hospital—were affirmed by acclamation, which showed on the morrow that married women in Glastonbury had not as yet, even under the pressure of strong inducements, lost all sense of what was due to their dignity.

Certain subscription cups were in the end produced, and whilst the tea was brewing, the conversation necessarily turned upon the retributive character of that justice-tempered evening's proceedings.

"Tilda dear," said a spare, tall woman, who wore a miniature of her late minister in her bosom, addressing Mrs. Dubbelfaise,—*"Tilda dear, shall you introduce the subject of this unfortunate creature to Mrs. Trevor when you meet? Think you that you will have strength sufficient for the occasion? I am always so unwilling to condemn; we do not know but that such trials as this girl's may come on us to-morrow."*

In that she said this, Mrs. Slim was so clearly

interested in the fate of Evelyn May, that she manifestly overlooked the age to which she had herself attained.

"My dear Mrs. Slim," answered Mrs. Dubbelfaise, with a strong recurrence of her "sweet smile," "it is so very necessary in this probationary state to have a few general rules, more especially when called, as I have been, to maintain an opinion in public places; whenever I know of anything that hurts the feelings of any presumptuous person with whom I may differ, it is my invariable rule, Sarah dear, to introduce it freely into conversation."

This much-recommended way of staving off excessive conversational opposition was received with much satisfaction by all but Mrs. Slim, who, more perhaps from strong controversial tendencies than anything else, rarely lost an opportunity of joining issue with her exceeding dear friend Mrs. Dubbelfaise.

"You are very severe, Matty, and you always *were*; but I think that we should pause before we pass sentence on the character of a girl who, after all——"

"Character! Mrs. Slim," almost shrieked Mrs. Matilda Dubbelfaise, "after all that we have heard. Why, what *can* you mean? It is by such injudicious hesitation as that which you propose, that such bold women—yes, *bold women*, Mrs. Slim,—are let loose upon our homes. You well may shudder, Sarah. By the dispensation of Providence, my poor dear husband is beyond such temptation; but recollect, Mrs. Slim, that the girl may insinuate herself into your home,

and tempt your husband; *your husband*—she is just the wicked thing to do it.”

“Providence forbid it!” said Mrs. Sarah Slim, clasping her thin hands, who was ready before this picture of her unfaithful husband to capitulate on any terms; “but tell me, Matty dear, do you really think so?”

“I believe her, Mrs. Slim,” said Mrs. Dubbel-faise, with her “lovely smile,” “to be capable of anything; and really, I must say, I wonder that any one with any self-respect could commit herself to such mistaken sympathy. But really, of course, Mrs. Slim, it is nothing to me if you encourage the girl. I should not like to hear it said of me, that I was the friend of a woman who had had a child in the street—indeed I shouldn’t, Mrs. Slim. I have heard, but I have too much charity, I trust, to believe, that the horrid thing is to wet-nurse Mrs. Trevor’s last great boy; but this sort of borrowing the blood of others is always a last resource of those who are talked of for their figures. What can Mrs. Trevor hope will be the future of her child, when she fills its great ugly mouth with the milk of this impudent hussy? If married women will admit such very questionable persons into their houses, really of course it is no wonder if their more *refined* neighbours are suspicious. Mamma always *did* set her face against it; but I suppose the impudent thing will turn governess some day, and mamma says that ‘governesses are always under suspicion,’ and that ‘gentlemen never marry governesses.’”

Mrs. Slim, truth to tell, felt this all over her,

for she had in earlier days taught a little herself; but she thought she might as well regain her position in Mrs. Dubbelfaise's good opinion, so she inquired of that lady, with a show of contrition that was very proper, if she did not think Mr. Mountaigne's conduct in the affair was not without suspicion, and if it was really faith without works, to believe the girl guilty in the absence of a ring.

"Indeed, Mrs. Slim, I have always thought Mr. Mountaigne's relationship to that girl exceedingly equivocal; my poor dear husband always liked the man; *I* never did, and invariably used my influence to keep him from the house; but Providence forgive me *if* I judge him harshly. Still, Sarah, you can know nothing of the large spirit of the Scriptures if you think that their interpretation can have anything at all to do with a ring."

Mrs. Dubbelfaise had now perfectly succeeded. She had established a slur of a great size against Mr. Mountaigne, and withal had *seemed* very charitable.

"Shall we not take steps," said Miss Todhunter, biting off a large piece of toast, "publicly to disavow all sympathy with the girl, and condemn her conduct in the strongest terms? We have a precedent here," she continued, opening the Bible before her. "My dear Mrs. Dubbelfaise, are we not told, as though in reference to this sad calamity, 'he who is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her?'" and that excellent lady proceeded to desire the application of that command might be so made prac-

tical, that in Glastonbury it should not go forth that any one amongst them could have had an unacknowledged baby at the workhouse door.

"Tilda dear," said Mrs. Slim, who saw that the moment had arrived in which she might cease to be the insignificant member of a party, and rise to become indispensable as an individual, "will *you* do it?"

"Do what, Sarah?" said Mrs. Dubbelfaise; "I am afraid I am much too shocked to be as impartial in my judgment as that beautiful prayer of Mr. Slie's desires we may be."

"Do cast the first stone, Tilda, you will do it so well," persisted Mrs. Slim, spilling her tea, and taking her friend's hand.

She had no sort of intention of being satirical, and they all who had not tea in their mouths said "do" too.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise observed, with marked gratification all the confidence she had centred in herself, "That she was sure she should chip a great bit out of the girl if she did; and that in a general way she hesitated to take retribution from the hands of Providence; but this was to be sure an extreme case;" and she proved from many scriptural sources that there were times when the calmest Christians were exhorted not to meet aggressors with half-measures.

So in the end the president of that committee turned her attention towards a special measure of retribution; and Mrs. Matilda Dubbelfaise, charging herself at a very large heap, went out in the night air to make an example, and to "cast the first stone."

CHAPTER V

WHAT BEFELL "FAITH WITHOUT WORKS" IN
GLASTONBURY.

Mrs. DUBBELFAISE, though much self-educated in such matters, could not in the main very well conceal from herself that she felt great comfort in a "sign." It was hardly what Mr. Slie would have called "a great yield of Christian love," that was just then the prevailing feeling in her breast towards Evelyn; nevertheless, under a great series of trials, "faith without works," in Glastonbury, was the one thing proclaimed. Not only did this come in many taking forms from the pulpit, but it had been committed to a motto on vellum on the wall of the Ladies' Blanket Club. Beyond this and other minor manifestations, it was evidenced on a scroll, which had been buried in a little bottle beneath the foundation-stone of the "Sabbath day schools." Mrs. Dubbelfaise, indeed, by her great zeal, had made it a standing subject for the copybooks of the infant school.

To such a strength had it attained during the ministry of Mr. Slie, that amongst the more seriously disposed of the ladies, there came up, after a one night's deliberation, a very excellent movement, which soon had a name from its enemies as the "Faith without works faction:" and those who were in any way moved to become

its members, were inhibited, under severe penalties, from believing anything that was not strictly a matter of naked unsupported faith.

To this division of the Glastonbury ladies did Mrs. Dubbelfaise belong: nay, it might have been well said, that without her the unassisted and wavering faith of that excellent town would have had no real belongings. However, whether the influence and reality of the society began and ended in the prevailing person of Mrs. Dubbelfaise, is perhaps unimportant; there certainly was no such extraneous indulgence allowed as the evidence of those things that could in any way be seen.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise, under these trying, because Christian circumstances, was at this period of her probation and of this history, in what she called "ecclesiastical difficulties." Therefore was it that she asked to breakfast her dear friend, Mrs. Slim.

It was a way that Mrs. Dubbelfaise had, to share her meals when anxious, and to have one of the "faith without works" faction to take bread with her during periods of such trying emergency.

That lady's difficulty, when faithfully examined, was such as in society often does present itself. She felt that she well hated Evelyn. She felt, too, that if she brought any of her usual energy into the feeling, her hate might not, on the whole, turn out ineffective; but at this crisis charity insisted on its claims, and this charity was, in the main, what Mrs. Dubbelfaise subsisted on.

In her heart she was powerfully disaffected towards Evelyn; still she believed in her heart of

hearts, that the persecuted girl might well stand side by side with any matron in all moral Glastonbury.

So, it will be seen that the difficulties of that lady's position were not by any means small. Did she enter on a great struggle with a painful thing, and speak not well of a girl whom she did not conceal from herself that she hated, the whole strength of the committee of the "charity club," and the "faith without works" faction, would find the very principles to which they appealed for existence disavowed by their founder.

It was clear, then, that Mrs. Dubbelfaise could not hate aloud, if she even looked over the ring. If she so far got over the shock as to save the girl,—and she believed the saving power remained entirely with her,—the credit and what not of the "charity committee" and the "faith without works" faction would be, of course, maintained.

That not altogether disinterested course was, perhaps, a consideration of much moment at a time when the collecting cards of those two excellent movements were going round; but, then, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who had not always the strength that the situation required, liked to maintain other things even better than the credit of such benevolent institutions; and if I must put on record what that was, it was certainly that lady's hate, when she had once given it on anything in full.

A sacrifice there must be; it only remained to divide between Evelyn, who had not many friends, and "faith without works," which just then, it is grievous to say, was not quite self-supporting.

To arrive at a right and temperate decision in

such a matter, was, of course, of weight sufficient to bring any two ladies together to breakfast.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who had been joined by appointment at that meal by Mrs. Slim, did not seem in her usual buoyant spirits. It is true that any moral defection on the part of her fellows had at all times its effect on her impressible temperament; but that morning she took much more than her share of the tea, on the ground that she was feverish; and Mrs. Slim, who walked the fever hospital as a lady visitor, in the end took much by her suggestion of a little innocent saline.

"Sarah," said Mrs. Dubbelfaise, after a very long silence, in that small suffering voice which was known to show that she was passing through a trial, "I have thought much through the whole night of your incautious reference last evening to 'faith without works.' I cannot disbelieve that that girl *is* a wife, but I have very excellent grounds, Mrs. Slim, for acknowledging in public no such belief. A word from me, Sarah, one little word, will do more for that girl than were I to say I had lighted on her ring in a pawnbroker's shop; but that word, Mrs. S., as a Christian woman, as one to whom many in this town are looking, I may well hesitate to give, without being told, I suppose, by you, Sarah, at a public meeting, that *my* faith wants any works at all. Faith, indeed! *my* faith carries me anywhere. I have come to believe anything, Mrs. S.,—anything except that which, as a leading influence in this town, I have a mind to doubt. You are weak, Sarah, though very excellent; if this is your opinion of our 'faith without works society,' on

the part of the ladies' committee, I shall be most happy, Mrs. Slim, to accept your resignation."

Now, Mrs. Slim knew, as well as she knew anything, that her influence in Glastonbury would have been vastly more insignificant than it was without the patronage of Mrs. Dubbelfaise; she also now knew that Mrs. Dubbelfaise, from certain charitable causes which it was, of course, unnecessary more publicly to explain, believed in the honesty of Evelyn's then position. She had enjoyed but a matter of six months' intercourse with the subscribers to the "faith without works" society in Glastonbury, therefore it did not once occur to her in any way to doubt that Mrs. Dubbelfaise—who, it was said, knew everything—knew exactly the particular point at which faith, in its diffidence, was compelled to borrow from the strength of works. Mrs. Dubbelfaise, moreover, it now seemed, had clearly other reasons for stimulating the suspicion which, among the monopolists of charity in Glastonbury, had been made to cling to Evelyn's name. Mrs. Slim, beyond all this, knew that it was purposed to do this, and a great deal more like to it, under the protective influence of charity; but then Mrs. Slim also believed, although no such belief escaped her, that this charity in that town often did cover and conceal an amazing multitude of sins: and so she met the tone of severity, in which her friend was in the habit of indulging towards weaker creatures, in a manner which showed that her opinions were at all times susceptible of explanation.

"You know, Tilda dear," she said coaxingly,

“that I have not learnt so much about faith as you; but,” continued Mrs. Slim, who, amongst other things, believed she was never too old to learn, “you will teach me, Matty, won’t you? I meant nothing by what I said. I—I only thought, that if you believed in the very improbable story of that Mrs. May, your faith need not concern itself with the absence of a ring.”

Mrs. Dubbelfaise was certainly not indisposed to accept the very liberal offer of terms conveyed in Mrs. Slim’s admirably-adventured reference to the improbability of the story as a half-measure of capitulation on that lady’s part; but there were other things introduced without thought into Mrs. Slim’s apology, which brought out that other smile, for which Mrs. Dubbelfaise’s mouth, amongst other things, was so pleasantly capacitated.

“Mrs. May, indeed!—*Mrs.*!—really, but of course you must excuse me; she shall wait till *I* call her that, Mrs. S. I think it very likely you may mean nothing by what you say—it has been observed, Mrs. Slim, that you often do—but things must take their course,—things shall take their course! I must beg, that if you do not like my tea that you will not waste it; you can leave it, if you please—but perhaps, again, Mrs. S., you do not mean what you say—it is five shillings a pound, let me tell you, with a dash of green. I do so wish that Slie would teach you a little charity. He, poor dear man, said I should adore nothing but Providence: but in spite of what he said, I do adore charity. You have now been six months with us, Sarah, in the ‘faith without

works.' What, my dear Mrs. Slim, do you know the more of faith? Oh, Sarah! faith is *such* a comfort—faith *without* works, Mrs. S."

Mrs. Slim did not just then feel that with Mrs. Dubbelfaise's faith this might be wholly impossible. It seemed, indeed, to her, that the faith so much recommended could very well doubt, with all convenience, what it did not like.

This was the view taken of that comfortable grace by Mrs. Slim; but beyond this she felt that this was merely the result of a six months' intercourse with a society where it was very incessantly preached, but not nearly always practised; so at least it seemed to her, and she fancied that another six months would bring up faith before her as the comfort spoken of by Mrs. Dubbelfaise.

However, before she well had time to collect her thoughts for an answer, Mr. Slie, unannounced, had entered the room.

Mr. Slie, by reason of his many opportunities, had long attained to that state of things when he could with difficulty persuade himself that he was not welcome everywhere. He had been—somewhat, perhaps, from the "Honourable" that garnished his name—made much of by the ladies, who thought it pleasant to occupy themselves about eternity in such very excellent society.

He could not well remember any one who had shown him more of this grateful kind of attention than Mrs. Dubbelfaise. It on no account required a second word from that lady to induce him first to pray over the meats that were on the table at inordinate length, and then to perform his part in eating them. I have all the more regard for the

man who, in these days of "religious liberty," is bold enough in mixed society to say his grace at all; but Mr. Slie asked a blessing on the food that was offered him at a length which might well have brought down a curse upon the table.

It was but natural that the ladies, so soon as his attention could be spared from his plate, should have been properly anxious to take his opinion on the application of faith to the particular instance of the missing ring. The view that Mr. Slie thought it proper to take was not merely to their comfort—it was consolation.

"I am at all times pleased," he began by observing—in a tone which the ladies in Glastonbury had been good enough to remark alone should give him a mitre—"when in such seasons of uncertainty any distressed member of my flock seeks me out." After this affectionate and pastoral introduction, the lady president of the "faith without works" and her companion were, of course, all attention, and it went straight to the heart of the thin Mrs. Slim, that she was one of Mr. Slie's lambs.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise, although the younger of the two, thought it nicer and more scriptural to remain a sheep.

"I do not," Mr. Slie resumed, "see, my dear friends, that in this case there can be any difficulty in coming to a conclusion. I believe," he added significantly, "I have always insisted on the permanent necessity of a large yield of faith;" and the ladies smiled in a manner that showed they were supported in the view they took; "but if this unfortunate, this erring sister is received

into our fold, it must of necessity be that we enlarge our door, and many such will strive on such a success to enter in."

The ladies shuddered, as they had endeavoured to feel all along that the end of this would be a rush of such wicked sheep to the fold with unacknowledged lambs. "Still, whatever we may believe—and in charity we are bound to believe the best—our exceeding faith must not be permitted in its fulness to carry us into that excessive clemency which would indeed be criminal." This, in its spirit of great Christian charity, was what Mrs. Dubbelfaise in her heart of hearts had longed to hear.

The difficulty of that lady's position was, that while she could not be said to be warmly affectioned towards Evelyn, she felt that the "faith without works" society must be supported at all risks. It was clear that the situation demanded from her very considerable charity, and yet allow her full liberty to hate the mother of the work-house child.

"The least we can expect from this poor creature," continued Mr. Slie, with patronizing benevolence, "is that she shall offer such evidence of her innocence as I, her pastor, may consider conclusive. Faith, my dear Mrs. Dubbelfaise, is an excellent gift; but we must in this world, in this town, not permit our faith to get the better of our judgment. I have often been privileged to tell you from my place in the Lord's house—and, God willing, I shall deliver a discourse on faith the coming Sabbath—that we must beware lest we become as tools in the hands of such plausible

impostors. As to works, dear ladies, it is not necessary that *I* should say what I can but think of *them*. The best amongst us by our works cannot avoid the worst form of damnation; but faith — faith is like a grain of mustard-seed, which——”

“It is indeed a beautiful tree,” interrupted Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who in her heart respected works above what Mr. Slie very evidently appeared to; “does the dear thing grow?”

The object of the lady’s anxiety must be brought in proper form before the reader.

On the establishment of the “faith without works” society, on his early coming among them, Mr. Slie desired that his flock should have the evidences of faith before their eyes continually. So with this feeling strong upon him, he went to the corn-chandler’s and bought a liberal penny-worth of mustard-seed. This he had sown in his own garden, in the face of many members of his congregation; and it was not surprising that, as time favoured his predilection for faith, a remarkably fine mustard-plant should be in flower in his garden.

When all this had come to pass, he invited those of his flock on whom no such lesson would be thrown away, to gather with him round his mustard-tree, and there, as well he might, Mr. Slie improved the occasion.

He first got capital out of the pennyworth of seed, and then pointed to the tree, where, he said, but for their presence, the “fowls of the air would lodge.” The chandler, too, had been got to come, and when he returned to his shop, and found that

he had much more of such likely mustard-seed in stock, he had suddenly within him so much faith, that he asked for the seed an advance on its price per pint.

But this was not all. Through a long summer, many were the faithless who became faithful round that tree; and in the end, by way of illustration, one of Mrs. Slim's white bantam hens was brought to shelter in its branches, and show how much real faith would bear.

Mr. Slie and the two ladies breakfasted very pleasantly; and, indeed, Mrs. Dubbelfaise was throughout in high spirits, for Mr. Slie had affectionately commanded her not to cease from her excellent purpose until Mrs. May was expelled the hospital; not, indeed, in any way as a matter of faith, but of expediency.

This took a great hold of the head and heart of Mrs. Dubbelfaise, for it had concerned her much to talk of charity, and still to hate; and Mr. Slie had brought before her the means of doing both.

It was quite true that Mrs. May had, by the kindly aid of Mr. Mountaigne, been removed from the workhouse to the hospital; and it was quite true that a moral by-law of that hospital very strictly provided that "no woman should be received as an inmate without she could produce, on application, her marriage certificate."

Now, it so happened, that Mr. Mountaigne was surgeon to this charity, and that from Mr. Mountaigne the application must come. Mrs. Dubbelfaise had seen her way very clearly to this little Christian embarrassment, when she had prepared the terms of her retributive resolution. Indeed,

that lady was not altogether without hope that the dismissal of Mrs. May would lead to the resignation of Mr. Mountaigne, whose place she desired for another, and whom she had never liked, although, whenever the occasion presented itself, she had told her late husband that she did.

Mr. Mountaigne had no discretion in the matter, and things in the end turned out much as Mrs. Dubbelfaise had anticipated.

Mr. Mountaigne had of unwilling necessity called for proof, and of equal necessity had had to report that Evelyn was not formally qualified to be received into that maternal charity. Whereupon, in consideration of her situation, some twenty-four hours were graciously allowed her to remove; and Mrs. Dubbelfaise came to hear, with feelings that for once were entirely her own, that it might be ten o'clock or thereabouts, on the morning of the morrow, that Evelyn, by virtue of the resolution, would be called upon to leave.

When the morrow had come, and ten o'clock was at hand, Mrs. Dubbelfaise had seated herself at the matron's window, to watch the effect of "her resolution."

When it wanted full five minutes to the hour, a carriage drove up towards the hospital at a rapid pace, and Mrs. Dubbelfaise took what she held to be her triumph with much charitable forbearance.

It was my mother's carriage, and contained, she hardly dare trust herself to believe—any such belief would have been so delicious—certain inquirers from the Grange. Mrs. Dubbelfaise at that moment felt herself to be a great creature. There would be no more babies born in the streets

after such an example. So she sat on at the window, and wished for Mr. Slie.

Mr. Slie, however, came not, and presently Mrs. Dubbelfaise saw the carriage-door again opened, and was full of the thought, that there were those at the Grange who would be ill able to bear this thing that she had done.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise could hardly believe even the evidence of her own beautiful eyes when the steps were let down, when Evelyn, covered with blankets, was laid in the carriage, by the hands of Mr. Trevor, and when that carriage drove away with Evelyn to the Grange.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise called first on Providence—which was not necessary—and then on faith, to help her to believe what she saw, which perhaps *was* necessary; and left the matron's room to seek out Mr. Slie, whom she found feeding Mrs. Slim's white bantam hen, as that bird sat in the branches of the mustard-tree.

It may very well be conceived that this anxious visit of one of the flock to the sheepfold, was not without a certain success; for some three weeks later, when Mrs. May applied to Mr. Slie to read over her the form of prayer provided by the Church for the churching of women, that gentleman, for many reasons, declined.

Whether church discipline was on the side of Mr. Slie is beside the question. Mrs. May did not press for his services; but she and my mother knelt together, in their thankfulness, in the church of the Rev. John Harcourt, of Little Glastonbury, the adjoining parish, some two Sundays later.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise, it afterwards appeared, was not wholly unprepared for this.

The Rev. John Harcourt, by that lady's report—which was not so well confirmed as it might have been—worshipped the Virgin Mary; at least he never abused her, which logically was held amongst Mr. Slie's congregation to mean the same.

Beyond this, my mother had knelt before the altar with "that thing;" but any one who would "treat for her milk," Mrs. Dubbelfaise declared she believed would do anything.

A few days later, the Glastonbury society of "faith without works" held its third anniversary, and Mrs. Dubbelfaise, as she made tea at the infant-school in the evening, could but think within herself that very lately in that parish, "faith without works" had been on its trial, and that the faith of Glastonbury in her was perhaps not of the growth of that emblem of belief which harboured Mrs. Slim's white bantum hen in Mr. Slie's garden.

CHAPTER VI.

GLASTONBURY GRANGE AND ITS INDWELLERS.

It is held necessary in all histories that there should be certain chapters given up to introduction.

As a man who in his time has held strongly to his own father, I have naturally a prejudice in favour of the Trevors—for any declared allegiance in these searching days to any one at all must bear that imputation. I do not in the least believe that I can do very little that is not right, because it may be said of my ancestors that they did so little that was wrong. But I am not the less moved to wholesome pride on account of the beginnings of my race, when I am reminded that no one of my own name has been handed down—full of blood to these times—amongst the great arrival of adventurers that were thrown on these shores by Norman William.

I have indeed heard of one present head of a great prevailing family, who up to that date had stolen Normandy sheep with a success that brought his heirs a large inheritance, who was much respected by the Conqueror for his ambitious but pastoral propensities, and who immediately on his coming over here took a wife, and raised up seed which grew and multiplied, the latter evidences whereof, even in this year of grace, have not left off growing into grace.

✓

I have no good reason to believe that I have such early blood about me, or that the Trevors ever came into England by such excellent opportunities. Nay, I have it on a very respectable tradition, that the first Trevor, by reason of his hating mutton, did not feel his appetite kindled unduly in any way towards his neighbour's sheep.

Certain Trevors there were in the "Wars of the Roses," but it is of malice said that they were kings' sons, and took the name to give their bastardy a better form.

When York and Lancaster had had enough, those Trevors had become extinct; and it was not until the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell that the founders of my race come in at all for their share of public report.

Arthur Trevor, it seems, in those days, became infamous on this fashion. He was seized, with many others, by the then prevailing friends of "civil and religious liberty," and ordered to be mulcted in a heavy fine, or in default hanged up at sunset, on suspicion of being friendly to the royalist cause; and Arthur Trevor—who it seems was no "man of business"—thought more of his oath than of his purse, and did not forswear himself, but kept his neck at the price of fourscore crowns.

This Trevor was a tiller of the ground in Gloucestershire, and in the process of years in lawful wedlock begot fifteen children.

So excellent an example bore its fruits; and the Trevors in such a manner increased, that a century ago they had so thriven, that one Audley Trevor came to Glastonbury with a pouch full of

money; and he, too, brought up many sons and daughters in the fear of God at Glastonbury Grange.

Now, Glastonbury Grange had passed from the rightful tenure of Sir Roderick May, on the witness of a perjured Roundhead, who swore to treason, and a very great deal more, for one pound one; and the estate was declared forfeited to and appropriated by the commonwealth. Cromwell, as he looked about him, liked the resources of the forfeiture well enough to make it his own for a convenient season; and after the Restoration it was restored to the Mays, who, at a bargain, sold it and its acres into the hands of Audley Trevor.

Glastonbury—or Great Glastonbury, as Parliament recognizes its representative—is a town of very considerable influence in the county of Westmoreland. At the time of the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, it was held to have established interests that called for representation. But this was said at the time to have a deeper meaning. The earl of Foxmore brought with him so much respect, or so much money, or so much of both, that Glastonbury, after a highly ineffectual show of resistance—which was got under after the promise from the earl of a pump in the front of the Town Hall, that was to give up its water free for ever, and after the town council had at once set to work to ascertain how much beyond the pump the earl might be good for—was given up to the earl's nominees, who talked as they were minded of their "independence," as other nominees, who forget their

position, unaccountably will; and it was even so far conceded in the end, that civil and religious liberty took much by the earl's protection.

Glastonbury Grange stood on a beautiful eminence, with Windermere lying far beneath it, some five miles from Glastonbury, and was held to have stood there in much of its present integrity ever since the earlier part of the twelfth century.

The venerable pile is perhaps more purely Gothic than any other in the county; and with its fine castellated towers and grand old keep, is as likely as any building I know, from its very seeming, to stimulate the Gothic renaissance that the more reasonable amongst us are now celebrating.

It is true that latterly many excellent friends of my father's, who had dined at a *table d'hôte* in Rome with a great architect, sought to persuade him that Gothicism had had its day, and that such a villa as they had sketched one sunset in the valley of the Po was in every way much more worthy such a site. It might be that this would tend to light and air; and of this light and air society is all at once asking a great deal. In the end Gothicism prevailed, and no one was called upon to found a residence on that drawing by the Po.

My father had been for many years, perhaps, not only one of the leading worthies of these parts in which he lived, but one of the celebrities of England. He used to say that about all he inherited from his father was an education, that, under a very liberal interpretation, was held to

be liberal—but which stopped short of certain finishing requirements—and a light-blue jacket with silver buttons, which had become all his own on leaving a preparatory school at Turnham Green.

My grandfather had died in very considerable embarrassment, and Glastonbury Grange had passed away to his creditors. There was not much here in the way of a large or an elastic patrimony, and the sale of the silvered buttons without reserve did not present in the summing up a very heavy aggregate of cash in hand.

But my father—who was never what in these days is much worshipped east of Temple Bar, as a “thorough man of business”—had not only when he came to fifty years, long been able to redeem the Grange, and to show an income of some ten thousand a year, but a capital stock, towards which, as has been seen, Mrs. McGrab, who in her spinster days had heard of such things as monetary panics, and of a financial paralysis, was observed at certain times to look anxiously.

Beyond this, that lady, who had in the main an excellent head for business, whilst she loved my father to such a degree, that the form of her great affection often drove away all other thoughts, believed that so solid an estate could very well bear the moderate charge of a settlement on her. As time wore on, the estate, it is certain, had to bear the charge; but as Mrs. McGrab, who was then Miss Chilly, observed, it was, after all, a vastly poor equivalent for all her disinterested attention to a middle-aged man.

Mrs. McGrab, indeed, did not now think so often or so much as she once had of City crises. My father had married a young wife, a younger woman, indeed, than Mrs. McGrab, by more years than one, and Mrs. McGrab well thought this to be a reflection on herself that might have been avoided.

Then arose a whisper amongst those ladies—who in those early days were admitted to a knowledge of these things—that a “little stranger” was quite likely; and Mrs. McGrab thought within herself it would be such a judgment as she even could enjoy, were the “foolish old gentleman” to be presented with two.

It was not possible, that lady argued, that the affection between any two persons so obviously unsuited for each other as my parents could be more than a mere matter of compromise. In such cases, too, it was notorious that there was always a large family; and an elderly husband and a young wife soon came to see, she said, what was to the advantage of children in very different lights. So Mrs. McGrab feared for the little ones that she feared might come. What was to become of their “little souls”? The end of all that lady’s emotions invariably came to this.

Great, gushing, and grateful, was the joy of my excellent father, when Mr. Mountaigne placed his first-born in his arms. How he thanked his God as he leaped from his bed that night, into the crisp October air, and blessed his boy; and when I see that first-born now—ever brother to

me—I know that what he asked was heard, and that the old man's blessing has well come.

My father was never a handsome man. On the contrary, Mr. McGrab, whose evidence can in no way be considered unfavourable, was much given to say that he was ugly, "ugly even as his dog," and Mrs. McGrab at all times refrained herself from that ill-favoured beast.

God had given my father a great mind, and a great, grand, sumptuous heart; and I do not even know that in the end, elegance and a sallow skin are very much to be preferred before them. My father never struck me down by hand or word. He would smile a smile of sad, wearying sorrow through his tears—that I could never bear—when my tutors and governesses reported ill of his second son. He could not believe that I could do anything that was not well; and I can look back now—back to that bitter day, when the snow so fell, and he lay very still in that sleep from which there was to be no waking here—and I can see his trust which first taught me to feel that I could not be false, and be the son of that grand old trusting man.

When I can steal away a little season to stand beside his grave, I can feel that the man in me is none the worse because the child was never doubted. I can look back, and I can feel that I may stand beside my fellows—though their blood be better than the Howards—and thank my God that I could call that simple, trusting man—that I could call *him* father.

I have an undying memory of a beautiful

mother. We may meet a handsome woman in any broad walk of this great town, but amongst the beautiful it was felt that there were few like her—that she was beauty's self. I have heard—so widely did the world acknowledge this—that when it was known she was in the opera, the lobby would be thronged with anxious crowds to see her pass. But it was not in the life of the lobby that she was born to be. It was in that home—long since a waste—home where her warmth reached me, that Marian Trevor might be only known. I can see her now as though the dear face was smiling through those silver clouds, from the long rest and the great joy that she has entered on beyond them, and I can see it is the face, the angel face, that—as I have wandered these many long years, cast up and down between suspicion and the bright day of a full and perfect rescue, when the wife said, “I believe, where is suspicion now?”—has come, speaking in its unutterable softness with a message between me and great trials, and a greater fall. Beyond that, too, into the far off my mother's memory takes me back, when her kiss was all I looked for when I had well done, and her sad, gentle, sorrowing anger all I dreaded when I had done wrong. The unresting life that has carried me, whether I would or not, into its great dreamy vortex, has felt the gathering strength of the first prayer she ever taught my baby lips to breathe; and I have come since through a chain of years, to know the power and the want of such a prayer, when as a man I have been jostled in the world, and when

she, who almost to my cradle had brought the comfort of those words, left me blessing, to herself be blessed.

How much comes back bright as though of yesterday, in the summing up of those dead years—her love, her loveliness, her grave! and though when by her coffin's side I stood, I felt what as mother and as wife must then be her place amongst the company of angels, when the lid was on, and the dust had gone to dust, I felt *here* at my heart of hearts that I, that earth had lost that heaven might gain.

It was endeavoured very early to apply one system to my brother and myself. There are but few systems, I believe, however incomparable in themselves, that will bear this sort of application, and there are indeed fewer dispositions, I am convinced, by whom they can be borne.

The presiding authority of the farmyard may as well talk of applying one system to everything that comes out of a shell. "The natural leader of the Whigs" must be the only family who have all been brought up upon one system, and with one object.

It was soon marvelled that I did not do all that my brother did. It was indeed wondered that I could ever want soap when his hands were clean, that I could desire to be awake when his eyes were heavy, that I was not well affectioned towards Mrs. McGrab, when my brother at times could bring himself to sit upon her knee, because that lady offered him comfits and cracknells out of her abundance, and out of the same plenty offered me none.

It was marvelled that I should not take all those things for granted, because he might have sufficient cause to believe, and that I should have desired play when his heart yearned towards his book.

There was nothing but one great bond of love that held us through all this together; and it might well have been that the one system that was to go so far between us, should have set us by the ears. That it was not so, says nothing for the system. I have kept that brother in sight since I could walk alone; and he is ahead of me now, just where he ever was, keeping me straight; and no one has a fuller heart than he, when it comes to him that I don't go very wrong.

From the nursery days when there was only one system between us, and I was always in scrapes, and he stood well enough to get me out of most of them, we have had occasion to differ. Excellent reader, my brother, though you may feel it not, is everything to you. A very brother is everything to the whole world. We have got a system apiece now, and still our hands and our hearts come together. There he stands as he always did, a great deal higher than I, but whilst I can stand under him I shall do well. He is leading me on now, and through these many years the kindly voice has floated there in front. He does not know how I have loved him, and believed in him this long weary while, when he has been up, and I have been down; how it has come right through those days that are gone, and is as strong now as it ever was.

It will be a great thing for him, if, by-and-by,

after our long rest, I shall stand by his side up there. The brother, who was first born, joying with a great exceeding joy, when he knows that he did nothing here to keep me for ever away. But in the far front I can see that he is down, holding his heavy head. He has worked these many years too hard. He put his hand to the plough, and there has been no looking back.

It very early appeared that I had not an unmixed respect for those in authority. This is not as it might well have been, but it perhaps may bear this explanation.

I was invariably from a boy much given to seeking explanations. Things were presented to me very highly recommended, which I wanted to understand before I could admire. This in any child is beyond all things held to be so very unreasonable. It was urged, too, that I was very dull because I was often thinking. Those put over me, foresaw early, with that fine preseeience which invariably commands a fine salary, that I should go wrong if by any calamity I lived. It was even said that I was combative, because I desired that certain opinions might be explained. Beyond all this it was said "I was uncharitable," because I did not quite see all the disinterestedness of those about me.

When I was no more than eight, I did that which I must feel was wholly unwarrantable.

I climbed one day up on to a stool, and standing right in front of Mrs. McGrab, I said, "Do you think, old woman, I don't know that in your heart you hate my papa and mamma, and that I don't know why you come here?"

Of course, Mrs. McGrab brushed me off the stool, and alike resented the spirit of my interrogatory, and the way I put it. Mrs. McGrab was not old; and whatever brought her to our house, all was done so decently, that a little lad of eight was certainly altogether out of place in the performance on the stool.

I probably knew more of the motives of Mrs. McGrab when I was seven, than my father did when he was seventy. It was very well to talk to me of "charity." I could see through that excellent lady before I well was breeched; not only because I have within me certain facilities for such observation, but because Mrs. McGrab, veil her motives how she might, was in the main very transparent even to a child.

Still such symptoms as these—evidenced too at an age when it is held to be very wrong indeed for any child to know too much—were brought before my mother with all those additions which the nursery executive can always at the proper time produce. It was said I was unamiably disposed. My parents struggled hard against the belief that they were asked to accept. I had been long thought dull because I was not always flippant and not often rude—because as a child I would never be polite conventionally. What I could not love I hated. There was no between. It was my curse then; it is my curse now. Even to my parents I would give no proof that I was not what everybody said I was. When I came to be asked how I could see anything whatever in Mrs. McGrab, saving those excellent gifts for which that lady took some credit to herself, I

much marvelled how that any one could ask me such a question. I had got that lady's heart before me open. I did not see how it could well be wrong to tell of what I saw. Mrs. McGrab declared "I stared so, it was quite unpleasant." Those that were set over me, pointed out what they called my irreverent behaviour, knowing the while that they were doing me a wrong. But the time had not come then, any more than it has come now, when what the child within it feels can dare be felt aloud.

A lady of thirty-five, a boy, and a sad boy too, of eight! For creeping up on that high stool, for the rude speech that I had there made, and for my indecorous treatment of that heart, I was argued with, but not convinced, foretold that I was going to the bad, and then without my tea was sent to bed.

The committee of the "faith without works" faction did not allow things to remain inactive. Even after Mrs. May had been received into my father's house, "It well might be," Miss Todhunter observed with diluted severity, "that there was the more to be apprehended when a family, which ought to have known better, took up with such a girl." But Miss Todhunter and her friends had yet even greater things to try their faith.

Mrs. May had with difficulty persuaded my mother into making certain inquiries as to the truth of the representations which declared her the wife of Geoffrey May. But in the end they came to nothing. Moreover, the "faith without works" committee heard that they had come to nothing; and when it was found that in the face

of suspicion such as this, Mrs. May still remained where she was, Miss Todhunter, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, and Mrs. Slim, severally made oath before credible witnesses, that they would renounce, for their name's sake, all future knowledge of my mother, which measure of renunciation did not evidence as much as might at first appear, for those ladies and my mother had never yet exchanged one word.

Mrs. May, as things so grew and gathered up against her, would have taken her baby in her arms, and have gone beyond the reach of all such tongues, until she could bring him whose name she bore before the "faith without works" committee in Glastonbury assembled. But my mother's faith prevailed over that of those who had even sown a mustard-tree.

On the fourth Sunday after Mrs. May's arrival at the Grange, two little ones were brought to the font in the church of the Rev. John Harcourt in Little Glastonbury; and my mother, and my father, and Mrs. Mountaigne, were sureties for that one who there was first called Miriam, and whose mother wore no ring. So I, Arthur Trevor, and my foster-sister, Miriam May, were brought to God.

It had formed no part of my mother's wish that Mrs. May should in any way occupy a position at the Grange below that to which she was born, but Evelyn May would remain on no such conditions; and, in the end, the undivided management of the dairy fell to her. Neither would she allow Miriam, as the child grew up, to be other than one who must work that she might live; and as

Mrs. May was not in this matter to be over-persuaded, whenever I wished for Miriam's company—and we were soon inseparable—I had to seek her in the housekeeper's room.

I remember once I had been playing there with Miriam, and we were resting from our long play, when, as was not with me uncommon, I stole up to her side to kiss her, and said in a tone which I did not think could reach the ears of Mrs. Perkisite, "When I am a grown-up man, Miriam, I will marry you, and then you shall come up stairs."

"Master Arthur, for shame," said Mrs. Perkisite, with all the dignity of fifty-and-five years in her mouth; "what would your mamma say if she heard you talk so to that child? but," and this was an aside, "this comes of harbouring such *things*. When you are a grown-up man, Master Arthur, I should hope you will know better than to marry the child of *such* a woman."

I could see the struggle that was going on just then within that lovely child. I have seen the loveliness of children, so that I have wondered how it was they lingered here, and were not wanted back for angels, but I never saw a loveliness like at all to that of Miriam May.

"Don't let her call mamma *that*," said Miriam, creeping to my side, whilst the big tears stood trembling in her violet eyes.

"I will say what I please, Mrs. Perkisite," I said, with much of that unbecoming defiance that has become, I have been told, of late years seasoned over much; "you are a spiteful old thing, and Miriam's mamma is a great deal better than you."

This was trying Mrs. Perkisite beyond all that she could bear. She had been called old, and she felt that no one could be safe if that imputation was to rest on fifty-five. She too had been adjudged worse than the woman whom she tried to believe—but did not believe—was no better than she well might be.

So Mrs. Perkisite fancied she was merciful under such circumstances, when she gathered up her voice, and ordered Miriam out of the room.

“She shan’t go,” I said menaenically—“shan’t go, Mrs. Perkisite”—and Mrs. Perkisite upon the spot gave up her temper.

Before I could well look round, she had Miriam in her arms, and was carrying my little playfellow out of that scene of trial, when I seized the house-keeper by the arm, until my nails made themselves terribly felt.

“You will be sorry for this, Master Arthur,” said Mrs. Perkisite, in a tone that bordered greatly on the ominous. “Will be,” was to me the business of the future, but I was not just then sorry at all; indeed, I was very glad, for Miriam, who had been released from the arms of a woman vexed beyond her strength, was standing by my side, and there seemed no symptoms of a rescue.

The end of all this was, that when I was ascertained to be most hungry, I was sent to bed; and there I lay awake, and angry, and full of a bitter purpose against the person of Mrs. Perkisite, which if carried out, would not have been to that lady’s comfort, when I became aware that some one had come near, and was standing by my bed. I thought it might be my mother, for I knew that

she would come, though angry, still to bless me; but when I heard a voice, saying, "Do eat this, Arthur, you must be so hungry, it is my supper I do love you so, for saying that of dear mamma," I knew that it was Miriam May; and before I could speak, I saw her little white figure glide through the doorway, and I was again alone.

So Miriam May and I beneath one roof grew up together, sharing one the other's joys and cares; and the "faith without works" committee had no faith indeed that this was right; but other mustard-trees, and their examples, had—watered by Miss Todhunter and her friends—in Glastonbury grown great and waxed strong.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW MY TUTOR LOST HIS EYE.

It is the more pleasant when the clergy do not object to take their bread in company. After such a fashion did the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie do much to please. It is not by any means untrue that he liked something with his bread; but then he had been brought up to lay more than a clerical price upon delicacies, and one day when, as he would observe, "It might please the Almighty to remove his elder brother," he would be an earl. Mr. Slie pondered much on the prospect of this remove; therefore was it that he was in much request as a diner-out. There were, indeed, special occasions, when he got as far as Glastonbury Grange.

My father did not like Mr. Slie; and my father felt that he might very well indeed dine three hundred and sixty-four times a year without that gentleman. Perhaps once a year did Mr. Slie dine at the Grange, to meet the Rev. John Harcourt, perpetual curate of Little Glastonbury; and often was it that these two fell out, and differed clerically, for the rector of Great Glastonbury liked his rubber, and the perpetual curate of Little Glastonbury did not. Mrs. Harcourt, too, on these occasions came, and she thought it well might be that the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie, the heir-presumptive to an earldom, should marry.

She did not like celibacy, any more than her husband liked cards. Indeed, on Mr. Slie's first coming among them, he was met more than halfway in the matrimonial idea by more than half the ladies of his cure. Something, it was said, had seemed at one time likely with Miss Todhunter, who in those days was well-looking, and had certain tenements—that stood her in a very excellent consideration—which had been her portion, Miss Todhunter, moreover, having blood.

Mr. Slie had had so far a definite passion for Miss Todhunter as to look at her tenements, and her title to them. It was to that lady's prejudice that he did. He found them much encumbered, and it then occurred to him, that whilst the altar would get rid of the Todhunter, it would not deliver him of the Tabitha.

At all seasons Mr. Slie stood well with the majority of the ladies. No man, they said, "stood half as near the kingdom of heaven;" but whenever his brother the earl showed symptoms of "being removed by the Almighty," Mr. Slie perhaps stood all the nearer.

When I had some time entered my ninth year, Mr. Slie came to the Grange to eat his annual dinner. When the cloth was removed, and before that gentleman and Mr. Harcourt had entered on their inevitable church polemics, Mr. Slie inquired of my father if he happened to want a tutor for his sons. My father took but little spiritual advice from the rector of Great Glastonbury, nor did he think his advice on any matter indispensable; but on this occasion it so happened that a tutor had been thought of Mr. Slie had

just heard of a gentleman, qualified in every way to take £150 a year, and give satisfaction. Mr. Harcourt—an Oxford prizeman, and a sound churchman—inquired how far the candidate's views might be those of the Establishment. To Mr. Harcourt the answer of Mr. Slie was eminently unsatisfactory.

"It might be," he said, "that his friend Mr. Wray could see excellence in institutions other than the Church of England. He was a member of that great church that called all Christians brothers."

Mr. Harcourt knew what that meant. He had little faith in men who held that the Church of England was not big enough to hold them, and he determined on a fitting occasion to warn my father against handing over his sons to any Non-conformist—declared or not—whatever. But my father was just one of those simple-hearted men who believed nothing ill, when report speaks only well; so Mr. Slie was told that Mr. Wray might be sent on approval, and on the morning of the third day after, Mr. Wray appeared.

Mr. George Alexis Wray—as was set forth on his card—was of rather over middle stature, and of middle age. He seemed to be on excellent terms with himself, and with his God; had written he said, a great deal on eternity; and was just one of those men who would have talked religion at a rat-hunt, had it served his purpose.

His nose was very long and thin, and his attitudes alone were such as made him cheap at £150 a year.

"He hoped," he said, "he should do his duty

with the dear boys, and if he did not, he should be 'obleegeed,' if my father would remind him of it; all here," he continued, "were liable to error." A belief which, if my father had not been much taken with the man's religion, would have shown him, from the very way it was all uttered, that Mr. George Alexis Wray had had a very large experience in such liability.

He then, with a graceful motion that seemed to have been acquired by long study, took from his pocket a well-thumbed prayer-book—a very material part of the imposition—and began to expound the collect for the day. After this exposition my poor father was perfectly satisfied; he had never heard that collect in such a light before. It was that for St. Peter's Day, and Mr. Wray declared his friends believed him in his person rather like St. Peter.

Mr. George Alexis Wray was not slow to discover what was my standing in that house. My brother stood a great deal too well to be materially injured; but it struck him, that without much ceremony I might very well be reached.

"I was idle," he said, because even as a child I was as indifferent as I well could be to his clumsy reading of the Latin tongue. This might have been got over; but "I was irreverent," he said, because I laughed when he expounded. I marvelled much when it came to me on his authority, that I must of all things be sincere to command success, and yet that he himself had been successful.

Mr. Wray saw, too, that though I made no such observation on a high stool, within a week I

saw clean through him. I do not say that it is well for all or any boys to take to seeing through their tutors, for not only in such a case would tutors have to come of a vastly different stock—which, with the present large supply on hand, would not be quite convenient—but there would be in a measure certainly less discipline.

Mr. George Alexis Wray, when put to it, could pray well, and could run well—both did him, as will be seen, very excellent service—but beyond these, everything that he did was very ill.

He was one of those measureless hypocrites whose successes in those households he infested were in the main brought about by an appeal to that religion which he only professed that he might profane it.

I well remember on one of those pleasant mockeries, the half-yearly examination, when my father and mother came to hear how we got on, that before he fell on his knees, he said, “I could have wished to have prepared a prayer, my dear boys, for this occasion, but as I came from my home this morning communing with my God, I thought that I would leave it to the inspiration of the moment;” and that so said, Mr. George Alexis Wray clasped his hands and prayed.

After he was gone, I found the prayer that had been left to the inspiration of the moment written on the fly-leaf of a Pinnock’s Grammar. Mr. Wray, too, knew that I had found the inspiration there, and hated me accordingly.

As time wore on, he got together the funds to open a chapel at Glastonbury, and on the Monday mornings would tell us that his preaching had

drawn towards him three great crowds ; that some in their zeal for accommodation, had taken hold on the pulpit door, and that others broke the windows to let the populace beyond get at some of the echo of his words. Strictly, this was not quite true.

On one Sabbath, five Nonconformists, who were uncomfortable under their own deacon, stood in a group to hear him ; but there was a worldliness in his discourse which disgusted every one of those five souls. Mr. George Alexis Wray, after that he had at length expounded a penitential psalm, turned to dwell on the saving that it would be to them to take a pew for a term. But the crowd, indeed, never got beyond the five, and after a bit the maximum was even something less.

I have said that Mr. Wray was a man who, under certain aspects, could run. After he had been a teacher amongst us for a considerable time, I observed—and he did not like my observation—that he would often unaccountably place himself first behind one curtain and then another, and look out as though he believed that there was that beyond the window, by which it might be as well that he should not be seen. So this in the end turned out. One morning, when his hand was on the bell of the hall-door, two gentlemen came in view whom he did not altogether seem best pleased to see.

There are times, it would appear, when even Nonconformity cannot stay about to declare itself, and Mr. Wray felt that with him that time had come. Taking to his heels, it was not

unbecoming that so great a preacher should be followed. Down one path and up another, the deacon led his congregation; but when a congregation wants the person rather than the pray-er, there is but little they won't do to get it.

Mr. Wray, like other and like better men, had got into debt, and what was worse, had never wholly meant to pay; and what was worse than all, had done so with the residue of his once congregation of five. Of course, his situation, he said, bore a religious, even an apostolic explanation. St. Paul, he gave out, "Had been in difficulties, but in the end had paid twenty shillings in the pound." However, on that morning Mr. Wray outran his congregation, and reached the study, declaring, when he could fetch his breath, "It was very warm; that he had walked far, that the distress he appeared in was the price of the popularity which consumed him, for his congregation had sent for him."

More latterly, the career of this gentleman was not wholly of a clerical character. In his time he had tried many things, but nothing with more success and more variety than that of taking a furnished house, and leaving it, with not all his obligations and engagements fulfilled, a convenient time before quarter-day.

Then those years came when he could not lift up his head even to say a collect. He had been a deacon, and had lost all that he ever had to lose. So his thoughts were turned to discount, and he started a discount agency in Leicester Square, and he is somewhere about now—always

wary when he comes to street corners, as he is perhaps full old for a run—sometimes of Clare Hall, and sometimes of St. Catherine's, but always of Cambridge, where he never had been.

It was on this fashion that the antagonism between myself and my tutor was consolidated.

Amongst many other things, Mr. Wray was an elocutionist. He did Marc Antony's oration over Cæsar's body in about ten minutes. The time here allowed was considerable, but that included pocket-handkerchief preparation. This gradual approach to public speaking was permitted us every Wednesday and Saturday morning. Mr. Wray declared that in his line he had been very successful; but then he declared many other things that it was well to receive in a spirit of caution. Demosthenes, he observed, at his worst, was never so bad as I was, and there was no reason why, when I got to my best, I should not be a great deal better than Demosthenes.

Mr. Wray's system took in pebbles, but my mother preferred that I should the rather stammer than put little round stones in my mouth.

It so chanced on one Wednesday, when Mr. Wray had been a tutor at the Grange some seven years, that I was learning what Brutus said in vindication of the leading part he had played at Cæsar's assassination, when I observed that Miriam May, unseen by the bi-weekly elocutionist, had entered the room, and hidden herself behind the curtains. Now, it was very strictly forbidden that Miriam should ever enter the study of Mr. Wray. My tutor objected to it on the grounds that there was a place for every one,

"and that that was no place for a great grown girl of more than fourteen years."

Beyond this, it was declared that she was "getting out of the girl," and that "I was getting out of the boy," considerations as to size, which invariably much prevail when children can in any way be placed under further disabilities, but which are as invariably disregarded when they plead on their own account the great proportions to which they may have grown.

Miriam and I were no common friends. I had often thought less of Cornelius Nepos and other such excellent introductions, than I did of half an hour's play with her. So I was concerned to see her where there might be danger in her being. She had come in, she said, to hear me talk about Cæsar; but although I might have said all that I had to say about Cæsar perhaps much the better for her being the audience, I was not selfish enough to let her remain, and overruled her wish to stay. With a look of entreaty in her beautiful face—for Miriam May was passing fair—I seized the opportunity, when my tutor's back was turned, to help her from her hiding-place.

Scarcely was this accomplished to my own satisfaction, when I was called up to say the last half of what Brutus had said in defence of himself; and having performed with much less promise than usual, was sent back with one of those false marks to my name, by which tutors, and governesses, and other such in authority, are sanctioned to depreciate children at pleasure in their parents' eyes.

Soon after this, my brother was dismissed

under manifestations of great approval, and I was detained to take upon myself the grief, so far as we know it to have been expressed, of Marc Antony, my tutor undertaking to illustrate the text.

He had come to a passage where he seemed to consider a good deal of warmth might be well laid out, and had raised his voice to a commanding pitch, when some one passing by irreverently took up in mockery the emotions of the great elocutionist.

"Did you laugh at me, you gross, ill-mannered boy?" said my tutor, walking up to where I stood, with his impatient fist all ready clenched to strike.

"I didn't laugh at all," I said, endeavouring to parry the blow, which a long experience had taught me was inevitable, in spite of any such disclaimer.

"That for laughing at your tutor, sir, and that for the lie," said the excellent and temperate man who was set over me, dealing me two blows with a huge dictionary, which brought me stunned to the ground at his feet.

I got up as soon as I could, and even he seemed startled at my look. He had injured me by one long chain of wrongs ever since he had known me. He had taught me often to doubt myself, when he had taught my parents to believe I could be false. He had brought my mother to suspect me—*that* I had not forgotten; but the summing up of all was in this brutal and degrading blow.

I went away to my own room, and called up all

that he had done ; and as I held my aching head, I even thought that I would kill him.

The next morning, when we met, I was sullen over the Psalms, and within an hour I was down on the wrong side of the book that had daily done to me a hideous wrong.

In the afternoon things did not mend. I had not forgotten, nor had I tried to forget, the blow ; and when my tutor's eyes were heavy—as at that time they often were—and I could see that he slept, I rose from my seat, without my brother seeing my movement, and felt that I was stronger much than I had ever felt before.

I could not go back now. It had been a long time coming ; and as I stood beside him, hating the more as I stood there, and heard his heavy breathing, I thought it would be well if the breath of the man who had so taught me to suspect myself, and to despise him, were at that moment to be stayed. I joyed awhile within me when I thought of *that*. I almost laughed, I was so glad ; but I restrained myself. I had then the purpose of a man struggling to be free, and do, and softly I crept up to his side.

“ Why did you hit me like that yesterday ? ” I said, shaking him by the collar till he started up from his sleep. I had not liked to take him by surprise, and strike him whilst he slept, so I waited for his waking, and then seized him by the throat.

A second later, and I should have been as nothing in his hands, but, boy as I was, he was in my power then ; and for the first time in my short life I knew what it was to have

revenge, and I liked it well enough to wish for more.

"Let me go, by G—d," he gasped, "or you will kill me;" but I closed my fingers all the tighter when I heard him speak of *that*. I was not frightened, but very glad, when I saw how black his face had turned, and how his eyes started and stared. Devilish thoughts had so come over me, that I laughed at his agony, and I said,—

"You will never hit me again—*never*—or try to make me hated by saying I am bad;" and at the thought of the last wrong he had so often done me, my fingers tightened on his gurgling throat: and whilst his blue-black lips gasped out great oaths, he drew out a knife; but I was too quick for him, and stayed his hand when he had meant to strike.

He had freed his throat of my grasp, and with his returning strength I knew my peril. As he dashed out the knife at me, I struck it back, and, with a cry that I can hear now through a long chain of years, he fell back in agony that moved *me* then.

It had entered his left eye, and I knew that by my hand had blindness come upon that man.

When I saw the blood upon his cheek, and felt what I had done, I no more remembered the many years that he had wronged me. I did not at all think of the punishment there would be for me, but of the great grief that would come over others. I felt a sickness creeping on me, such as I had never felt before; whilst my head turned giddy, and for a while I was as one that was dead.

How long I remained so I cannot tell. When I could see, and hear, and understand again, I found myself in bed, and the face of my mother, which then was very sad to see, hanging in its great sorrow over me.

"Arthur," she said, throwing her arms round my neck,—for before all things did her love prevail,—“Arthur, you will break my heart. Great God, be merciful! What have I done, that you, my boy, should so have fallen?”

Had I been minded to remain unmoved, I could not so have done before *that* face, and sitting up in my bed, I said, rather to calm her than justify myself, “He struck me first. You don’t know how many years that man has done me wrong.”

“Arthur, he says he never struck you; he says he had fallen asleep when you took him by the throat. Do not make a sin so heavy worse by adding to that sin a lie.”

“Mamma, say anything but *that*; I can bear all but that one word. If none respect me, how can I respect myself?” was the cry that my heart gave up. “I could not love you, as I do, and tell a lie.”

“But your brother, even, has unwillingly confessed that your tutor never struck you.”

“It was yesterday, mamma, that he struck me, when George had been sent away; he struck me down with a great book.”

“You provoke him, Arthur. He has borne much from you, but you have tried him beyond his strength. From what he says, I fear you do not speak the truth.”

"Mamma," I cried out, for I could not bear that doubt from her, fixing my eyes with a long, steadfast look upon her face, and with my heart in every word—"mamma—no, no!—you do not, must not say I lie—it will kill me if you do. You *must* believe in me!"

That mother had never so been spoken to by any boy before. She scarched my face; her lips moved; she fell on her knees by my bedside, and, burying her face in the clothes, cried out—she did not speak,—

"Arthur, my boy, say what they will, I—I *do* believe in you."

I felt then, as I heard those words, as I had never felt before, as I have never since felt in all the time that has come between. I had passed in a minute to a man. I was believcd. Some one, and that one my mother, spoke of faith in me. I lived a new life. I had awoke in a new and a fresh world. I threw my arms around her—I felt her hot breath and her hot tears upon my face—I clasped my hands, and lifted up one of those prayers that she had taught me in those days that had passed, but had left their sign, and I lay back in a great calm, and thought of what I had done; and in that, past revenge had no part at all. I would have undone all for that mighty present joy. I grasped her hand, still clasping mine, and looking in the face that had spoken of its trust in me, I felt that her full love had yielded all I asked; that I could sleep, and so awake to face the world upon the morrow.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEREIN MR. LATIMER LATITUDE THREATENS THE
LAW.

It was not very long before rumour had it in Great Glastonbury, on excellent authority, that the younger son of Charles Trevor carried about with him, on his jacket and trowsers, the blood of a fellow-creature; indeed, the particulars of the whole affair went through more than one edition.

It first was put up that the congregation of Mr. Wray, with awful sadness, had lost their deacon; but, after a very little consideration, it came to be understood that, anticipating some such bereavement, he had before that parted with his congregation. Then it was said that Mr. Wray had even fallen by my hand, and that his body was then lying within his own chapel. To that chapel, those who were for seeing such a spectacle as that of the "dear dead deacon," took their way; but it was found that the creditors of the supposed deceased had gotten to themselves possession, and that they knew too much to give it up on any such a pretext. Many returned dissatisfied that they had not seen what they called the "dear corpse;" and when it transpired a little later that Mr. Wray had no present intention of laying himself out in grave-clothes in any attitude, in

any chapel, the more unreasonably satisfied were incensed because there was no corpse to see.

Of course, Mrs. Dubbelfaise and her friends, if to some extent more full of years, were still able to secure to themselves some capital out of this. Miss Todhunter, naturally enough, *as* Miss Todhunter, could only rely on a theoretical experience; but she agreed to the full with Mrs. Dubbelfaise and Mrs. Slim, that all this came of "certain people" allowing their children to be nursed by others who ought never to have had any children at all. In this matter there was, indeed, a chain that they could hold by quite through.

Evelyn Mervyn, it was convenient to remember, was brought up neither to desire nor have any of those educational advantages which, by so many benevolent ladies, had been at one time or another so liberally offered in the tinted prospectuses. She had, indeed, spitted blood over certain shirt-fronts of great price, and then taken to the stage very much against the great good judgment of a minister of the Gospel, whose experiences were none the less well received, because they were also those of the brother of an earl. Hereabouts Miss Todhunter gave up the narrative which she could no longer pursue with delicacy, as it now trenched upon details naturally shocking to a maiden lady. Then was it that Mrs. Dubbelfaise took it up, and could talk, and did talk of her presence, and point with a shudder to prophecy.

Ever since that early morning of the 24th of January, when the east wind had blown, and Miriam May was born on those flags by the work-house door, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, in what she called

the "cause of propriety," had not in any way ceased to profit by the circumstance. She had stated in public what would come of it if Mrs. Trevor let "that hussey" nurse her child. Mrs. Dubbelfaise had even gone on to hint that worse than Sabbath-breakers, that those who at one time thought little and then nothing of the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments, often did arise out of some contingency to be traced to their nursing. She had over and above this quoted her "ma" on the subject; and beyond that, which in all reason should have been enough to bind the world, Mrs. Dubbelfaise never went. Indeed, Mrs. Dubbelfaise had almost starved her own "boye" rather than sacrifice him to a nurse who had no very distinct remembrance of her wedding-day. Her "ma" had put such women down by the street at a time; and where, in that process of extermination, "ma" had been got to stay her hand, Mrs. Dubbelfaise had herself begun.

Through fifteen years that lady had in no wise forgotten the missing ring: the commentary, she said, "at last had come." I had been reared on the blood of the wicked. Beyond what I had gone, very far had I still to go. I should get to delight in blood; she was "grieved for Mrs. Trevor, very much so, indeed, but there was no doubt about it; only, of course, if people would bring up their children on such food," wrote Mrs. Dubbelfaise to her "ma," on a sheet of committee paper, with "CHARITY" very large indeed in the corner, "they could not be surprised when the judgments of Providence overtook them."

Miss Todhunter, so far as she could understand what was presented to her, saw things very much in the same light. She had been brought up by hand with a new sort of bottle, so soon as the little Tabitha had become overmuch for her mother's means.

When it was known what I had done, those ladies tea-ed together. The matter had at first enjoyed all the striking immunities of a first-class breach of the peace. Mr. Slie, as the Christian sanctioned to go farthest, took some pains to give it the reputation of an attempt at murder. Of course, when he heard that it was nothing of the kind, in his great charity he was very glad to hear it.

As much of the intentional exaggeration abroad was meant to reach me, I soon heard the various well-embellished forms my offence had been made to take. So far as they affected my own character, I viewed them with utter indifference; but I with more than mere anxiety watched their influence on the minds of my parents. I had not so long cast off those wearying disabilities which for a length of years had been used to my prejudice, that I could see without a concern I could not conceal, how far in this matter my parents' belief in me might rise superior to those wretched suspicions which the self-elected religionists of Glastonbury had contrived in such vast numbers; and I was as indifferent then to what the world might say, as I should be at this moment of this present year.

But as day by day rumour unchecked in its great lust took the greater liberties, partly because

it was pleasant to circulate what was never true, and especially because it was to the educated taste of those amongst whom all this circulated, I felt that I could stand up with no one near me, against this and whatever more might come, so long as *they* who called me son stood up with me there.

By all those who had many followers I was utterly condemned; and the voice of that condemnation, as it swelled—for the charitable lent a little voice—rolled on till it could gather nothing more, and laid its Christian accumulation at my mother's feet. Not a whisper did any one among that throng of charity dare at any time for me. I stood aside to watch in an agony that often made me turn so sick as I never have since been, if they could believe on, where such professed charity in strings and groups had doubted altogether.

The last bitter breath against me came: in and through them did I try to see; it passed by me—it passed by them; I buried my head on the father's heart of the fond and trusting man; I wept on that breast where I had lain as a child—*they* believed. Utter, mighty, was their love. Before them I thanked God; before God I thanked them.

When Glastonbury fancied things were as much as my parents could well bear, my father came to hear how that Mr. Wray had—as has been seen—outrun certain gentlemen behind the elms, who had come to seek him. Indeed, his congregation of five had shown very little feeling in the matter of the eye; and after a while it was so said in

Glastonbury that Mr. Wray was only abroad till he could the better see his way to prison.

Other evidences of the Nonconformist's hypocrisy had followed one upon the other; and my father some ten days later wrote to Mr. Wray, requesting that gentleman to discontinue his attendance as tutor at the Grange.

Mr. Slie, when he heard how Mr. Wray was professionally again at liberty, remarked it had been well said, that "those whom God loveth he chasteneth;" and, moreover, it very greatly seemed as though Mr. Slie did not like even to appear to come near the chastened man. "It was not well to disturb the patient, or the other eye might go." So in public places did the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie justify his neglect of the maw-worm uneasy in his agony; and the simulation was not seen through in any way in Great Glastonbury. You and I have got to know that the brother to the earl had indeed no fancy to stand by the writhing wretch he had recommended, or to take his place by the bed of a half blind and a wholly broken man; but towns other than Great Glastonbury think very much as Great Glastonbury just then did.

Three mornings after this, my father was informed that a "gentleman" below desired to speak with him. The gentleman below was invited to come up stairs, introducing himself by the name of Latimer Latitude, saying—over and above such an introduction as such people who get into drawing-rooms, where they have no business, and where they cannot behave ordinarily, do—that he was a member of many

learned societies, and then proceeded, with some circumlocution, to disclose the object of his visit.

"There seems to be some little mistake," said the man, very mildly indeed—for although I may have introduced him as a "gentleman," on the butler's authority, the reader will hardly desire that I should continue the illusion—holding out the letter of release which my father had so addressed to Mr. Wray.

"Indeed, my poor excellent friend, though in grievous and great affliction, is sure that some one must have been taking a liberty with your name."

"Then, sir, I must beg you, as you seem disposed to carry messages, to assure Mr. Wray that that letter *was* written by me, and that when I did write it, I was never more in earnest in my life."

Mr. Latitude, upon this, smiled blandly, cleared his throat, was bowed in his loins, shuffled about among the books till he had got at a Bible, which, as the representative of Mr. Wray, seemed to him the very best thing for the occasion.

"My poor afflicted friend," he answering said, "is like a poor dear lamb; you may strike, and he may bleat, but he will not bite; he bears no malice towards your son; you cannot fully know how ready he is, unless you see the beautiful feeling of resignation that has come over that excellent and much mutilated man. He bid me say that he forgives your son from his heart, as he hopes himself to be forgiven. That he prays for the dear boy; and, sir, we can none of us despise that fragrant intercession, for

the prayer of a righteous man availeth much. He——”

“Bid him pray no more for any son of mine,” said my father, in anything but a tone kindred to that of Mr. Latitude; “he had better occupy himself on his own account, for your excellent friend is no mean rogue.”

“Never was man more anxious to be at rest,” said the delegate, disregarding the imputation against his “excellent friend,” whose voice and utteranees went very well together. “I often tell him he thinks too much, a great deal, of heaven, and his prospects there, to the neglect—if I may speak of such trifles—of his butcher’s bills, and too little of the dear friends whom he has drawn towards him. He is a great creature, sir—a very great creature.”

“Mr. Wray,” rejoined my father, “may be all and more than you describe him; but if I might offer a suggestion, it would be, that for the rest of the time he is among you, he devotes sufficeient of his thoughts to this earth to pay his debts. My time just now is not my own, and if you have nothing further to detain me, I must wish you good morning.”

“Sir,” said Mr. Latitude, his voice one whole tone further subdued—“sir, my excellent friend, so little careful for himself, does not forget that he is a minister of God, that he——”

“Then, sir, I do,” said my father; “nor do I wish to be reminded of it here; your excellent friend is nothing of the kind, sir. A successor of the apostles might do better than dodge his

creditors behind my trees ; and you may tell him that from me."

"Sir, my afflicted, my uncomplaining, ministering friend, holds his appointment direct from his Maker," said Mr. Latitude, with one other degree of humbleness ; "he has saved many souls, has my poor afflicted friend."

"It is a pity he has not saved a few pence, to prevent sheriffs' officers running him down in my grounds," said my father. "Why, he can run like a lamplighter from the law, can your friend. Hold his appointment from God, sir !—don't blaspheme. With such as he, the Being whose name you take in vain will deal by-and-by. Cease these allusions to your friend's condition ; I have no time to hear what he is, or where he wants to be."

"Pardon me, but my afflicted friend *does* think in his great trial so little of the things of this world, that it is necessary for those who find in him a bright exemplar, leading on to a glorious eternity, to see that his interests before he leaves us are not prejudiced. He has not laid up for himself treasures upon earth ; he——"

"He is not worth a farthing," said my father ; "I can believe it. A man may make a fool of me once, but he never repeats the proceeding ; and I really do not see how your excellent friend could expect to lay up treasure with a congregation of five—of five, sir, and on a wet day it isn't that. But, may I ask, for what practical purpose you have done me the honour of this call?"

Mr. Latitude had by this time almost gotten himself double, and his voice was nothing better than a whisper, whilst he replied,—

“My excellent and afflicted friend——”

“Leave your excellent and afflicted friend to the devil, sir!” said my father, “and come to the point, if you have a point about you, or else leave the room.”

“My dear sir,” said the deputy maw-worm, “you make free with spirits that should not be familiar. Separate not yourself from my excellent friend in the great hereafter, where he will rejoice to meet you, by language such as that. Devils pass by such as you and I to get at him——”

“They will get accommodated,” said my father.

But Mr. Latitude, without heeding the interruption, continued, “My dear friend has done more to put down extortion than any man in Great or Little Glastonbury; but he feels in that he has done his duty to you, sir, and your dear boys,—though great and exceeding will be his reward hereafter—a great calamity has overtaken him in your house, and that whilst, but for a merciful interposition of Providence, your dear and savage son would have killed him, he has received an injury, for which, as an afflicted Christian, he looks to you, sir, as a Christian, for a little Christian compensation.”

My father saw all in a moment, and could hardly resist casting himself on the abject person of the hypocrite before him.

“Tell your excellent friend that it is so far fortunate he expects but little, for he will get

nothing—nothing, sir. I am sorry for his eye, very sorry, but he should not have struck my son.”

“Sir,” said Mr. Latitude, getting a thought more straight, “that good and great Being, who has bountifully visited us with every blessing, has mercifully allowed us certain laws, to preserve to us those blessings. My afflicted friend desires but justice, and does not, like all great preachers, desire a great price.”

“I tell you, sir,” said my father, “that you waste your time and mine; he struck my boy, or my boy would not have struck him. I am content to be unlike all the world, and to believe in my boy rather than in the hireling that I can never forgive myself for setting over him. Begone, sir; the manner of your speech and the contortion of your body are alike to me offensive. Begone, and tell your excellent and afflicted friend, that whilst I regret his affliction I do not believe in his excellence.”

Mr. Latitude saw that the time was now come when he must get himself straight and speak out, and he did both; and it was in the end astonishing how the Christian delegate got on without any more of his religious parallels.

“Very well, sir,” he said, shrugging his shoulders, a movement that might have represented pity; “then perfectly understand me. Your son has, with premeditation of malice *prepense*, destroyed the sight of one of the eyes of the Rev. George Alexis Wray.”

“Of Mr. George Alexis Wray,” interrupted my father.

"Of the *Rev. George Alexis Wray*," persisted the delegate, "without any provocation; his very comeliness as well as sight is gone."

"It is a lie, sir," said my father, "a lie, and so I would tell your afflicted friend, were he but here to hear it."

"He will give you every opportunity, at no very distant time, for unless by this day week you transmit to him, for the loss of his one eye, the very inadequate compensation of five hundred pounds, together with my very moderate charges for this visit, he will, acting under my advice, take such steps as will place your son, sir, on his trial at the next Chudleigh assizes."

"You can convey to Mr. Wray, my deliberately expressed opinion—and from what I have observed in yourself, I should think you must have enjoyed great facilities for coming to a like opinion—that he is an impostor, sir; and, like all impostors, would degrade religion to cover his imposition."

"I shall certainly communicate your opinion to my reverend friend, when he is strong enough to hear it——"

"You will have a long time to wait, sir, before you are in a position to say anything to any *reverend* friend of *yours*," interrupted my father.

"And, indeed," resumed Mr. Latimer, "I shall make a note of the expression, for fear my memory may fail to do you justice."

"Do," said my father; "and tell him that your coming here to-day, first to blaspheme, and then to bully, has convinced me that there are other impostors in the town—others, sir. He had

better canvass his congregation of five, rather than be separated from them, for think of the peril to the five souls if such a communion should be broken up. Why, five, as you must know, wouldn't pay for the lights. Mr. Wray may take what course he pleases. I would go to gaol before he ever gets a penny of my money."

"As Mr. Wray's legal adviser, I give you notice," said Mr. Latitude, closing the Bible, as he now thought it might be time, "that steps will be at once taken to bring your iniquitous son under the law. I wish you good morning, sir.—To *very* long attendance," chuckled to himself the little man, as he took up his hat to go.

"And I wish you nothing of the kind," said my father, leaving the room, and desiring the butler to see that "that person" laid his hands on nothing valuable.

So out of that house, under some suspicion, did Mr. Latimer Latitude take his way. Now, Mr. Latimer Latitude was a preacher as his friend Mr. Wray. He saved souls on the Sabbath day, and took six-and-eight pences the other six.

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH MR. FIFIE, Q.C., IS SPECIALLY RETAINED.

MR. LATIMER LATITUDE well said that Mr. George Alexis Wray had not laid up for himself any treasure upon earth. Never, indeed, on earth, had preacher come to greater need. He had been an unlikely and a sore adventurer long before and ever since he had been a grown man; and he did not find—as my father had taken occasion incidentally to observe—that preaching to a congregation, where the aggregate was five, did at all pay for the lights. Mr. Wray was, therefore, not wholly uninfluenced by anxiety to learn how far Mr. Latimer Latitude, in his mission to my father, might have succeeded.

Mr. Wray, although a preacher, had all that capacity within him for the appreciation of strong language, to know better than well, that something, somehow, had in the end gone wrong; when, on Mr. Latitude's return, that gentleman swore two great oaths, the one at my father, the other at my father's solicitor.

"It's no go," said Mr. Latitude—who rarely confessed that he could be unsuccessful—preparing to continue cursing, "he does not believe a word of either of us about your not hitting the boy first; he knows too much, a great deal, for he has got to hear all about your d——d chapful of

five. He won't pay a groat; but it was a cursed long attendance, mind you, for a guinea."

Mr. Wray sat up and tried a smile, which smile showed the more, and perhaps too much, in the eye that was left, as he said—

"Won't pay, won't he? then curse me but I'll make him!"

Mr. Latimer Latitude laughed, perhaps, at the impotency of his blemished friend. "It's all very well," that gentleman said, when he had again become serious, "to talk about making; he knows that you did give that boy of his a lick on the head; he isn't to be made, he sees your thinness through and through, whitewash and all, and no mistake about it."

Mr. Wray, who looked to see if his clothes had got whitewashed by accident, felt as uncomfortable as his friend desired he should, and shook himself in his raiment to see if it had anything to do with my father's faculties for seeing through him; and then said, with a grin that might have been pleasant had he not lost an eye, but which was not so as he had,—"*whatever are you looking at so, Latitude?*"

"Looking at!" said the apostolic attorney, just condescending to sneer,—"*why, at you; you shouldn't grin like that, it does look awful.*"

Mr. Wray first lay very still with a strong fancy on him to bury his head out of sight, and then he winced, as it was meant all through he should; but now that he could not grin without being told to stay his mirth, as it frightened his fellow-men, he felt the more that some one or another should be made to pay for the limits that were

put to liberties he took with the expression of his face, and he replied, with his hand over the hollow place where his eye had once been—

“If I can’t grin, Latitude, without being told to hold my mouth, some one shall pay for stopping me. Try the old ’un with a compromise, tell him two fifty will keep the thing snug; and if he don’t like that, drag the boy into court for cutting and wounding and stabbing away my eye. Oh, my G—d, Latitude, my eye *is* worth two fifty.”

“It’s all very well to put such a price on that cavern, but who’s to pay for the prosecution?” said Mr. Latitude, in a tone of very appropriate contempt. “You don’t stand so well hereabouts, but what you may very well lose. It’s no good, that long face, you can’t come over *me* with your Bible: *that* won’t get a verdict out of a jury.”

“But the old ’un will come to terms before ever it comes to that,” observed Mr. Wray, with great apparent faith in the strength of what he felt would be. “He won’t like to see the boy at the bar, pleading not guilty, when it’s not a bit of good, without a soul to stand by him. Go in for five hundred, half’s yours, if you get it; if he don’t come down, pull up the boy,—the mother won’t let it come to that; it’s as good as got,” said Mr. Wray, with a stray shy bit of the old grin, that was just as much too much as ever it was for Mr. Latitude.

“Don’t grin like that, or you will make me sick!” observed Mr. Latitude, with all his usual delicacy; “if you get into the pulpit now you’d do well enough to illustrate one of your own judgments. Wouldn’t you just do for a devil out and

out? But I don't care," continued Mr. Latimer Latitude, with his feelings evidently softened at such a prospect for his friend, "if I do see you through this little business, Wray; half what the old 'un pays down, if I understand you, comes to me, or else we'll have the boy up before the bench, have him committed for trial at the next Chudleigh assizes, and then get Fife specially retained."

"It's a delicious go," said Mr. Wray, darting up with a very vain repetition, indeed, of the forbidden grin, and springing about in the region of the attorney like a very parched pea. "Latitude, it's a bargain; only mind that it *is* half you have, and that it isn't more."

Mr. Latimer Latitude's reputation was such that he could very well afford to sneer; but merely observing, with considerable caution, that "it was a great risk, although it was well worth the while of the law, and of a great lawyer, to take such risks," he went out from the presence of Mr. Wray.

The measures of Mr. Latimer Latitude very soon assumed some form. Within four-and-twenty hours of his interview with Mr. Wray, a letter was addressed to my father, offering, with much liberality, on the one hand, to take five hundred pounds—a miserable consideration for the loss of the left eye of a man who could fill a chapel—or, on the other, threatening to bring me before the bench of magistrates, on a charge of cutting and wounding with intent, &c.

My father, when he had quite realized the full meaning of the threat, wrote to his solicitor

requesting his advice; and when that gentleman came, instructed him to intimate to Mr. Latitude that as for the five hundred pounds, he dared say Mr. Wray would well like the money, or any part of it, but that he would neither get it nor anything near to it.

My father's solicitor soon saw that Mr. Wray had a case which, in Mr. Latitude's very excellent care, must leave my father nothing to do but pay. "A one-eyed man," said that gentleman, "in the hands of Mr. Latitude will not easily be shaken off; my advice is certainly to listen to a compromise."

"Is it?" said my father; "what! show that I believe him when I don't, and that I don't believe my boy when I do."

The lawyer, very lawyer-like, saw that this was very well, full of fine feeling, but that it was not business; and shrugged his shoulders and smiled, after a manner which seemed to say that he could be satisfied under any circumstances. Were there a compromise, his conscience would be easy; were it to go on, his purse might get swollen.

Mr. Banco, who had tied up his first wife's "Manual on Weaning" in red tape, was what is called, "a family solicitor," that is, two considerable family fortunes had been paid through him; and the one and the other had left something behind in his hands of a satisfactory character during the passing through. But in all his transactions, was Mr. Banco, if not honourable as a solicitor, which might be a paradox, yet very honourable as a man.

"You will do as you please, Mr. Trevor," he

said; "but I cannot advise you to resist a compromise,"

"My dear Banco," said my father warmly, "I know you for an old friend; but, look you, isn't he my boy? He says he has been wronged; if I compromise this, I shall practically doubt him, and before God, Banco, to oblige society, I can't do that."

"As you will, my dear sir," said the lawyer; "but you must remember that a compromise, whilst it would not declare that you believed him wrong, would only show that you could not prove him right."

"Prove!" said my father, spitting out the lawyer's hateful word, "what proof should I, should any father, ask when a son, who never came and lied, begs for belief from me when all goes so against him. Banco, no child has ever come about you, creeping up upon your knee, and seeming to say—'Father, all those there, back in the big world, load me with suspicion; will *you* still believe, and I can look them in the face?' and, Banco, it is good for an old man to come to see his boy wanting all such faith, and all such love, and getting that care-nothing for all scorn. Banco, do I look to doubt that trust? What, faithless in *you*, my boy! Arthur, look on your father now, and say 'does he not believe!'"

The lawyer was touched; he saw a full swelling tear standing in the eyes of the old man, as my father said,—

"Say no more, my excellent, my honoured friend, it makes me devilish to feel that I am even asked to limit faith in him."

Mr. Banco, who knew well when *nisi prius* should be paramount, and the heart might be served, saw what was meant in the strong words that came so softly spoken from my father's lips, and the lawyer from that day never in that way so urged him.

Mr. Latimer Latitude arrived at certain disturbing conclusions, when it came to him that peradventure was my father never further from anything than he was from entertaining any proposition for a compromise. That gentleman, as he had confided to Mr. Wray, invariably made play through the mothers; and he knew that my mother would not bear up against what was coming next. Mr. Latimer Latitude, who at most seasons was not in his person a demonstrative man, did that with his fingers which was intended to show that in his colourable imagination he had already got my mother in his hands. Mothers, he had calculated, with some nicety, were so much a year to him; so on this occasion did Mr. Latimer Latitude rely hopefully upon what would come to him from my mother's sorrow.

I felt a damp chill creep over me, when I heard that in so few hours, at most, I must stand accused of a great crime by Mr. Wray, before the bench of magistrates. It seemed to me as though everybody must be thinking of the trial that was coming on me. My brother, when I lay awake that long night, lay awake too; and through all those weary hours spoke such comfortable words, that I could not rest until I had got up from my own bed to wring his hand. I felt, as in my agony of heart I crossed the room with

a parching fever burning up my skin, that I could part with nothing then that clung to me.

Miriam May I avoided, for it seemed that one so gentle must hate me for this dark thing that "charity" and "faith" would have it I had done. I could see that when Mr. Latitude had so reckoned on what was to be got out of my mother's feelings, for him and for his, he had well calculated how far a mother could go. I could see how the struggle grew, and how each day there was strength the less to bear it. *Her* boy in a prison! for it might come to that; and often when she sat alone did I see unseen the bloodshot eyes and the quivering lips, as she on her knees asked Him to bear away the sting. But I could look in her face still, and her heart of hearts spoke there, speaking of that mighty trust of which upon the world's suspicion that mother yielded none.

The long night passed away, and the morning dawned that was to see me accused before the Glastonbury magistrates.

It was just ten o'clock when I heard myself spoken of as "the prisoner" for the first time; a deathly sickness crept over me, though I struggled not to flinch, but I heard my mother's stifled cry, and I looked up, pale but bravely, for I felt that would not do. The appearance of my late tutor, with his one great eye blinking in the sunlight, created of course very considerable interest. During the proceedings he not unfrequently sighed, perhaps because he felt for me, perhaps because the unhealed wound might pain him still. It was generally observed that all through he

adopted an attitude which was said to be with him a pulpit favourite, and that the eye I had spared him was frequently upturned.

Mr. Latimer Latitude, in a long speech, said a very little that happened to be true, and a great deal more that was not. Indeed, the last few sentences summed up the more heavenly excellences of Mr. Wray, and the impossibility it would be to get for any one a great Christian congregation to listen to a man with one eye. Mr. Latimer Latitude concluded by calling on the bench to commit me for trial at the next Chudleigh assizes, and then sat down to see what might come of my mother.

By Mr. Banco's advice, who attended to watch the case on my behalf, I reserved my defence, whatever it might be, that gentleman doing nothing more than detailing to the bench the unlimited resources at command for putting in good and substantial bail.

Hereupon Mr. Latimer Latitude, who had been calculating his not unlikely chances, drew himself out of his pleasant thoughts, and got upon his legs, in a manner which showed he was about to urge upon the bench that anything so aggravated was no case for bail, when I interrupted him, in my ignorance, first to inquire of Mr. Banco what this bail might be, and then desiring the bench to understand that any application for me to be at large was made without my wish or consent, as I had resolved to go to prison.

What I had so affirmed was, from the manner of the man, not to the taste of Mr. Latimer Latitude, that gentleman having made much of

disappointing me in the matter of bail; and having found no opportunity for my disappointment, or for his delight thereat, I could have stood out all, and more than ever came, even the bitter smile on the lips of Mr. Wray, had I not heard—as it grew in its agony—my mother's groan. She would see her boy borne off to a prison before her eyes, nor could her love, nor her arms, hold him back, as they snatched him from her; and all this came now with a reality to meet which she thought she had been so strong, whilst she knew not what to cling to when it came.

“Save him! O God, save *him!*” I heard her cry, as the next case was called on. I knew that what those bloodless lips quivering so had spoken in that cry, were borne up, and would come back, bringing with them some exceeding joy, and I said,—

“Mother, as I stand here now, with this heavy charge upon me, do you believe one word that they have said against me? Do you believe in the face of words so foully false, and before all, and whatever more may come?” To my father, and in the hearing of those who had journeyed together, I said the same. Steadily did the old man raise his head, and as my mother lifted up her eyes to his, she seemed to take her struggling faith from him. The words that I had looked for came, they both blessed, and, ecstasy to me, they both believed.

I cried aloud in my bright joy. A gathering strength had come over me. I passed on; the crowd fell back; why did that crowd so stare?

Did not that old man there believe? Did not that mother's trust, the power of which could not be told, still cling to me? As my steps led on to prison, I could pass there without shame.

For a few minutes, by what was represented to me as a special indulgence, I was suffered to be alone. Moments beyond price were those coming up to greet me in the chain of time. *They* had in one voice before all, sworn never to doubt and not to grieve; and as the door closed that parted us, the tears that fell from that man and that woman were no drops wrung out of agony, which to see might rend anew my heart. They were the witness of joy which came to strengthen hearts that must have failed, but that in such sorrow they joyed, because they had not doubted me.

In my prison I was never very long alone. My mother had free permission to see me as often as she pleased; and indeed had I even gone back from my resolution, I might within an hour have been at large on bail.

There were but three days to Chudleigh assizes from the morning of my committal, and the evening before the day that was to convict or to acquit me, was at hand. I did not ask my father or my mother, as the night grew on, if they still believed, for I felt that that belief had gathered in its strength, but I could ill bear up against the thought that Mr. Banco shook his head at the defence. There was, indeed, no defence at all, and the judgment of the morrow might part me for a while from them. It might break the heart of that fond, that true old man,

and as it broke, destroy another. I knew well the sacrifice my father was making to place beyond all doubt his faith in me, and I could only thank him when I thanked God.

"Arthur," my mother said, as the moments drew on when they must leave me for the night, "Mr. Banco says it may be that to-morrow will part us;" and as she spoke she clung to me only as a mother can, and called me "her boy," till I wondered if the man who was to sit in judgment on me on the morrow could see all then as I saw, if he would ever speak the word to part us.

"Arthur," she said, "if I must give you up, God's will be done, my darling boy; but," she added through the choking tears, "you can still be saved, your persecutor will still forego revenge for money. He——"

"Mother," I said, "would you keep me with you at a price so foul? your name, my name could not be lifted up again, loaded with suspicion such as this—all will yet go well."

They both looked in my face, and smiled a smile which seemed to say, that through all their faith would come; and after that, for a little season, their hearts were filled with yet another thought, the one that for their comfort overmuch prevailed; it was this, or very much like to it, "When next we meet, he will stand where the murderer and thief has stood;" but they fought with this, and in the end it seemed as though they mightily prevailed.

"There is one thing I had almost forgotten," said my mother, as the message came to say that

we must part; "Miriam May entreats to speak with you to-morrow before—before——" but my mother, though she had borne up well, could not finish that; and I said, as they blessed and left me, "Miriam is a strange girl to wish to see me here; but to-morrow I shall want all my strength, ask her to see me *there*. Many out of their charitable malice will come to judge and see, I cannot give up one of those who wish me well;" and long after I was alone that night as I lay awake, when all in the prison was so still, I wondered how it was that little Miriam May could wish to speak with me.

When it came to be known that Mr. Fife, Q.C., had been specially retained, Great Glastonbury got to feel that for a season cutting and wounding would be rebuked, and that the Trevors must part from their second son.

Mr. Fife, Q.C., was the leader of the circuit, and whenever it was worth his while to go into court, those who could give an opinion on the matter were very sure that Mr. Fife, Q.C., was not going to lose. Indeed, Mr. Fife, Q.C., never lost. Whenever such a contingency seemed possible, Mr. Fife, Q.C., took his retainer, and stopped away. He was a heavy-looking man of advanced "Liberal" opinions, whose forensic qualities just then very much contributed to the convenience of his creditors. Perhaps his personal estate was not so free from liabilities as it well might have been. Mr. Fife, Q.C., had once taken occasion to observe from the hustings, that "He never went beyond shilling points," but there was reason to believe Mr. Fife had exceeded that figure.

Mr. Fife, Q.C., in his devotion to his species, was what is known as "A man of the people," and these men of the people do not always pay their way. Mr. Fife, Q.C., had long lived upon "cries," and such sustenance did not seem to threaten atrophy. He had offered himself to many constituencies that desired to be delivered from some territorial interest, and on one of these occasions had been so misunderstood as to be stoned away. He had given himself out to be the friend of the "working man," and "liberty," and "progress," and the rest of those things which adventurers do not seem to find it very difficult to say. After the manner of many who profess this sort of devotion, he had lived by the one and existed on the other.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise and Miss Todhunter, who did all such things together, and, by reason of their age, did many things which aforetime they would have shrunk from, prevailed on Mrs. Slim to share in the expenses, and so journeyed together to Chudleigh assizes. Miss Todhunter felt one-third of the apportioned cost that fell to her was rather high; but so it was, Mrs. Dubbelfaise having contrived that her unmarried friend should, by some fiction of figures, pay for all. Miss Todhunter in other days had made one judge a black cap, that judge having arrived at Chudleigh at a crisis when three murderers had made it necessary that some one should ask for mercy on their souls after they had been hanged up, and had left his cap behind him; but, then, that judge had happily in his veins a recognized solution of the Todhunter blood, and

Miss Todhunter had not been unmindful of the established connection.

Beyond this, the expenses of those ladies were in no way excessive. They had journeyed by coach, because it had been made clear to them that at assize time the fares were very low, and, over and above this consideration, there was no driver to pay; and "when we get to Chudleigh," as Miss Todhunter observed, leaning on the arm of Mrs. Slim, who was but little able to bear it, "we must hope for the best." Miss Todhunter carried her purse in her bosom, where she felt it might be even safe from thieves. They got across the market-place after much tribulation, as any three women would, and thought they should like to see the parish-church. If they had been three men, their anxiety would all have been to find the billiard-table; but then those three ladies took more thought for the pew system than they did for pool. When a woman has been round a church, and paid the verger a whole fourpenny piece, she invariably believes herself so much the nearer to heaven.

Mr. Slie had taken such steps as his pastoral intimacy with Mrs. Dubbelfaise justified to get them three seats together in the front of the gallery of the court when I came to be tried; and before the doors, twenty minutes before the doors opened, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, Mrs. Slim, and Miss Todhunter, with beef sandwiches and other such sustaining things about them, had presented themselves.

Miss Todhunter was as nervous as a much younger "girl" would have been. She felt she

was going to be crushed, and made spiritual preparations for any calamity. As she passed her life in review, and said such prayers as she could remember, it comforted her to remind her companions more than once that she had known a judge. She tied a piece of green silk round her little finger, in case, when she was found, her body might be otherwise beyond recognition. Now, Mrs. Dubbelfaise had never known a judge. Her "ma," who was so very refined, knew everybody *but* a judge, and Miss Todhunter's intimacy she could not see was anything to talk of.

"How warm you *do* seem, Tod dear; you shouldn't excite yourself so at your age," said Mrs. Dubbelfaise—who was fifteen months and a week younger than her timid friend—as the perspiration stood on the face of Miss Todhunter.

Miss Todhunter confessed that she *did* feel a little bit all-overish, and climbed up to the door—the first thing she had done on her own account since leaving Glastonbury—to look through the keyhole to see if anybody was coming, wondering if her friend would turn out to be the judge. Mrs. Dubbelfaise did not quite like this evidence of responsible action on her friend's part, and in time this appeared, as she said, "I suppose you know, Tod, that there are no jobs like the jobs of the bench, and that the weakest men are always made judges; but I hope, whether it's your friend or not, that the judge to-day will have the moral courage to punish this dreadful boy."

Miss Todhunter, indeed, did not know that the patronage of the bench was as it was presented to her, or hardly what a job might be; but, as her

friend was speaking, the door opened, and as she was forced against the angular person of Mrs. Slim, she felt if it must be that she could yield up her life in perfect readiness. She then gave out something from Mrs. Hannah More, to be used in crowds, and so they were borne up the stairs, Miss Todhunter, in the struggle, getting only a place in the ruck; but she said when she reached the top, that, as the eager people about her were at one moment like to set foot on her person, she had "trusted in Providence to get her out of it."

Mrs. Slim kept her friend straight whilst that friend got her breath. In a few minutes the court could hold no more; it was the second day of the assizes, and I stood for trial first. The three ladies had got to the front of the gallery, and had eaten a sandwich or two, determining, with various degrees of severity, what my sentence should be, when the bar rose as the judge entered the court.

Before that surging throng, I felt how much might fall on me before the sun that day should reach its setting. I looked round the court and saw many a hard face fixed in its callous ridicule on me that had come to sneer from Glastonbury, to see my shame, and listen to the judgment on the rich man's son. Others, I thought, pressed forward to wave their hands and cheer me with their cheering faces, and many would have grasped my hand as I stood at that bar, as they would have had I stood in my father's hall. I singled out those faces and those hearts that had come for me to lean on, and after that

I got strength, and I could see plainly what before had seemed dim, and I stood up before all. When that day was gone by, whatever might come of it, I felt those hearts and faces would go in their kindly grouping with me.

My father stood near me, and my mother sat by his side. I saw in her pale face how she sank down, utterly beneath—to her—the gathering terrors of that scene. But I could joy to see that in the struggle she fought against her agony, and when the many voices, which had seemed as one murmur, were hushed, I caught up that strength which would bear me through all, from the smile that, like God's sunlight, touched me with its balmy warmth.

At five minutes to eleven I was called on to plead, and as the words "NOT GUILTY," thrown up from my heart's core, swelled through the silent court, I could hear the laugh of Mrs. Dubbelfaise, and saw her in the gallery above me, with a yesterday's Bath bun in her hand. Now, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, although from hereditary causes she was so very refined, had, in some strength, that terrible thing in any woman, a loud laugh. As Mrs. Dubbelfaise *was* so refined, I am left to suppose that any woman should laugh loud. Out of the Bath bun she took another bite, which very much disfigured what remained of the stale pastry, and squeezing Miss Todhunter's hand, said, with a recurring suspicion of the refined laugh, "Toddy, dear, this *is* 'nice.'" Now, a Bath bun at noon is of all things a nice thing; but when Mrs. Dubbelfaise made confession of her comfort to Miss Tod-

hunter, it might have been the scene that was so nice to her rather than the bun. But Miss Todhunter thought that her friend dwelt over-much on the success of the confectioner, and offered her a moiety of her raspberry tart, whilst her friend despised in her such evident simplicity. Mrs. Dubbelfaise brushed away the crumbs, and got herself together, that she might the better listen.

Mr. Fife, Q.C., whom incidentally it may be well to say was retained by the contributions of Mr. Wray's creditors, when he rose for the prosecution, seemed to have within him a proper appreciation of the jeopardized interests he represented. Mr. Fife, Q.C., gambolled with the jury. He knew that the twelve men before him would be his toys for a little season, and would come in the end to see things exactly as he desired they should see them. When he apostrophized that impressible dozen from the neighbouring shops as the "*gentlemen* of the jury," those twelve men, who had left their trades unwillingly, felt that Mr. Fife, Q.C., had not misrepresented them.

Mr. Fife, Q.C., first approached those antecedents of Mr. Wray which could bear such ventilation. This brought him to preaching in its infinite variety, and Mr. Fife, Q.C., here allowed himself to speak of my tutor's vast congregational following, likening that gentleman, in a suitable parallel, to the Evangelist in the wilderness, setting aside the little difference of apparel, and asking the jury to consider how sore a strait St. John the Baptist would have been in

if, by the premeditated malice of any lad in those days, he had been so deprived of sight.

The injured and eloquent man for whom he appeared *was* a Baptist. He had come to the water when he was twenty-five. He, Mr. Fifie, Q.C., was of the Anglican communion, but if any thing could take him, Mr. Fifie, from his own precious church, it would be to hear that mutilated, godly man, whose agonies laid so heavily on the prisoner's head. The real force of this did not transpire. Whatever might have been Mr. Fifie's favourite communion, Mr. Fifie never went to church, so any one less attractive than Mr. Wray might well have got him to the Baptists.

It would be attempted, he believed, to depreciate the numerical strength of Mr. Wray's congregation, and to show that that gentleman had been latterly in difficulties. He should call the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie, one of those few liberal men who, whilst they believed the Prelacy to be an excellent institution, although apostolic succession not a proven thing, was a member of that church which recognized all Christians as its members. If he misinterpreted that Hon. and Rev. gentleman's opinions, the Hon. and Rev. gentleman could set him right; but as Mr. Slie did not subsequently see occasion to set another construction upon Mr. Fifie's account of his liberality, it remains that Mr. Slie's church sympathies did extend somewhat beyond the church. As to Mr. Wray's necessities, it was well known what had been said of the rich man in connection with a camel and a needle's eye. He, Mr. Fifie, never saw a great fire but what he thought of the

end of the rich man. He, Mr. Fife, regretted that the ministers of the Gospel could not all be pluralists. Those days had ceased to be when preachers might frequent a wilderness—as a blind alley was more the thing—or could be permitted to appear before any congregation in camel's hair. Since those times the police had come up, and the minister, whoever he might be, had no discretion but to dress. Mr. Fife, Q.C., believed it would be endeavoured to support a desperate defence by the assertion that Mr. Wray had in some way provoked this savage act. He then passed on to the circumstances of the offence, characterizing the premeditation which had been exhibited as a feature quite without a parallel, even in his experience. He feared I was a bad boy, and that my parents would in the end have very much to answer for. At this exquisite bit of feeling, those who had come from Glastonbury were described, in the county papers, as having given way to some sensation, and Mrs. Dubbel-faise, who could appreciate the sally, felt that her exhausted energies might rally on another bun. There were certain features, Mr. Fife remarked, that aggravated a piece of savagery which he must believe unequalled in our criminal annals. The jury would see that I had taken away the left eye of that estimable man with his own knife; why a fiend, continued Mr. Fife, would have been content with his own cutlery. A shudder at this ran through the court, and my mother tried to beg a little water.

It would hardly be credited, Mr. Fife resumed, that after the implacable boy had so dyed his

hands in that good man's blood, no one saw the mutilated preacher in his visitation home. After this, when Mr. Wray's irreproachable solicitor had come to the father of the savage boy to ask, not compensation for that gaping place, said Mr. Fifie, pointing to the hollow where the eye had been, but in the forgiving spirit which characterizes all that comes out of that excellent and Christian man, for some little sign of sympathy, too little to be mentioned here—but which will be remembered hereafter with the widow's mite—the parent of that boy turns round to the legal representative of this noble-hearted man, and tells him that the authorized preacher of God's word there is an impostor, bidding the very butler watch him out.

Gentlemen of the jury, there can be no cavil about this. So hurt was that solicitor, and so little accustomed to such language, that in his simplicity he made a note of the expression—the unpremeditated means of convincing you that there must be no mercy here. Consistent with their attitude throughout, and able to defend nothing, they compel a suffering, a blemished man, in no condition to bear a scene like this, to be led here, led by a little child, taxed with the cost of a righteous prosecution. *Gentlemen* of the jury, I feel that I am speaking to Englishmen, who have come here to-day to do justice, by the application of the law to a child in years, but a man in crime, who filched away a knife to strike a sleeping servant of that Being before whom your oath is registered. *Gentlemen*, that half-blind creature is a brother—a brother, who to his grave will only see half what his God has made. Look,

if you can—for, gentlemen, I can't—upon that hollow place; think of what his agony has been; then look at that boy, and bring to others who may strike with a clasp-knife a retribution as righteous and an ensample as terrible. Even in these days crime may come upon us with all its dark resources, in many an extended phase, appalling in all countries, and startling through all climes. Gentlemen of the jury, we are called together here this day by such a crime—the blood of the preacher calls to you.

Mr. Fifie, Q.C., when he got down, much hungered, was fed to the full with subscription sandwiches by Mr. Wray's creditors, and then the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie was called, and after he had taken off his lavender gloves, was sworn. His evidence went to corroborate the excessive popularity of Mr. Wray as a minister of the Gospel, and in every way to confirm what had been said of my tutor's religious character.

After Mr. Slie had created the impression it was meant he should create, Mr. Wray was led up by a lad of tender years, and sworn. He swore very hard indeed, and nothing harder than that so far from having struck me on that or any other day, he had never struck me in his life at all. But the oath he had taken took in more than this. He made it appear that I had filched the knife from his own pocket, whilst by some inadvertence, caused by many cares, he slept; and made choice of the blade that had just come off the whetstone, and when he was unconscious, struck it home into his eye. All this, as Mr. Fifie had concluded, went to show the premeditation of

the crime. He, Mr. Fife, should decline to call my brother, as from where he was sitting at the time it was not possible he could have been a witness of the blow.

This was the case for the prosecution. Mr. Chevely, who conducted my defence, happened to think differently, and whilst he made it clear to the jury that I utterly repudiated Mr. Wray's statement made on oath, that he had not struck me down, proceeded to call my brother, who swore that Mr. Wray had himself taken the knife from his own pocket, with the very evident intention of striking me, and that in my own defence the accident had been occasioned, which it was now sought to magnify into a crime.

When it was known that my defence was summed up here, and that the word of a boy was in the balance against the oath of a preacher, it was felt amongst the great mass of those in court that Mr. Fife, Q.C., had not taken up a losing case.

There was a pause, when nothing was heard but the pens of the reporters and the ticking of the great clock. The judge settled himself down to his notes. He had cleared his voice to speak, when a movement in the back of the court for the moment centred attention in that direction. The people fell back; silence was proclaimed, but for all that did it not in any way prevail. I looked up, and near to where I stood, trembling and beautiful, kneeled Miriam May. Then it was that those who were there to listen bore one the other down to hear what was to come; and then through the eager court spoke the burning words, clear,

above, and before all, "I can save you—save you! I will never leave unless they let me speak."

"It is the workhouse girl," mounted in a murmur through the throng that still pressed on, and these words were caught up and echoed by every man to his fellow, until all had in turn proclaimed it. But there Miriam still kneeled, the full meridian sun lighting up her lovely face; and her hair, which was golden as her mother's once had been, when she lay at the workhouse-door, had escaped in its rich wildness from beneath the hat she wore. She seemed like an angel kneeling there—an angel, but for the care and sorrow which had settled on that faultless face. Her beautiful eyes were strangely fixed in all their searching majesty on me, her hands still clasped against her heaving bosom. Her bloodless lips struggled; it seemed as though they would say something that could save me. The reporters gathered themselves up to describe her; every man and woman in the court strained their eager eyes to see her; and there Miriam, in her exceeding loveliness, still kneeled on, until above all, and above the laugh of Mrs. Dubbelfaise—it must needs be said it was that lady's *other* laugh—I heard the impatient words of the judge asking for some explanation of the interruption.

"Miriam May," I said, "if you have come to save me, speak;" and Mr. Banco rose up, and after a minute's conversation with the girl, went across to Mr. Chevely, who in another minute, with the rapt attention of the whole court, had said, "Your lordship, this girl has evidence to give

that may very materially alter the complexion of the case."

"Let her be sworn," said the judge, and Miriam May stood up for the defence.

Mr. Fife, Q.C., thought within himself that this irregularity might very well have been avoided. If a well-looking girl, he said, could be turned into court in this manner, to colour a desperate case, it was time to protect the law. It was, to say the very least, suspicious, when the defence broke down, to introduce a girl whose mother, he understood, had been of a questionable character. He had known such cases where witnesses had not been unwilling to swear to anything.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise the while got up, untied her bonnet-string, gave one of her little laughs, and audibly confirmed the unfavourable opinion of Mr. Fife on Miriam's mother. Mr. Fife smiled, some might have called it a sneer—but it was the smile that had brought him much at the bar—and looked from beneath his heavy, overhanging brow, upon the jury. The jury, in the main, understood what this should mean. It was an appeal to be just over the attractiveness of that face and form; and then Mr. Fife, Q.C., as he always did when he thought that an oath might be taken lightly, turned to Miriam May, and would ask her if she knew the meaning of an oath.

I had watched Miriam from the first moment she had so knelt beside me, and when I saw her there, it came over me, could she witness falsely to save me? How beautiful in her innocence she looked, as at the mocking words she turned her full, soft, soul-lit eyes on Mr. Fife, and said,

"Yes, sir, I do. I heard you swear just now outside, and mother said that was an oath."

Mr. Fifie, Q.C., began very much to think this extremely irrelevant to the damaged eye. He did not desire such publicity for his unconsidered words, and sat himself down with that full measure of dignity which was meant to signify a great deal more than perhaps was expressed.

Mr. Chevely smiled, for out of the very simplicity of the girl had Mr. Fifie's reproof come. Miriam satisfied him that she knew the meaning of an oath; and, on being sworn, explained that she had hesitated to give this evidence before, as she believed the safety of her mother depended on her silence. She had been, she said, in the room on the morning when my tutor had so struck me. She explained, that knowing it was forbidden her to be there, and her mother having said they would have to leave the Grange if she was ever found in that room, at my wish she had left, but, unseen by me, had returned and hidden herself. She saw the two blows struck, and when Miriam May stood up and said this, no man or woman—not excepting the three ladies in the gallery—could look on her and disbelieve.

Mr. Fifie, Q.C., was well satisfied to leave the evidence of a girl who had hidden herself behind some curtains, and who had come in such a manner, unchallenged. Then came the hush, restless and wearying, of expectation. The judge summed up. So did the people hold their breath, that there rose up a mingling cry for air. The prisoner, he said, by his counsel, had affirmed that Mr. Wray had struck him. This had been con-

firmed by Miriam May. Mr. Wray, it was to be remembered, had denied it. If the jury were satisfied that the prosecution here had broken down, it would necessarily create a prejudice against the remaining evidence of Mr. Wray. The judge went through, at great length, all that had been witnessed on both sides, the summing-up being, it was remarked, on the whole, not favourable to the prosecution.

Then came those minutes which were to me as long unresting years. As I looked down on my mother's face, that had sunk down in her hands, I waited for the jury's words.

"We find the prisoner NOT GUILTY," said the foreman; and here a shout rang out which was taken up again and again, and I cannot tell whether the judge did or did not try very hard to put it down; and then the foreman, when he could, continued what he had to say, "of wilfully cutting and wounding the prisoner with a knife." This was not all. "We desire to express our belief that in what he has sworn to, Mr. George Alexis Wray has been guilty of wilful and corrupt perjury."

Now, Mr. George Alexis Wray perhaps had thought so too, for, a little antecedent to this crisis, he got with a great suddenness to feel the heat of the court, and went out for air, and went out so far, that to this day he has not come back. Indeed, he was so believed, very shortly after that, to have got a grant of capital out of some one else, and devoted a first-floor in Leicester-square to discounting little bills. But with this and other variations in his life, he still remained a preacher.

Mr. Fife, Q.C., when brought on to his legs,

took occasion to witness from his own mouth in divers emphatic degrees, that Miriam May had not very wrongly interpreted in a certain sense the meaning of an oath.

Those who had journeyed from Glastonbury could not at all keep still, and put up a series of great cheers, which were of course in decency repressed, and then repeated. They fell back in glad rows to shower their good words upon us, as my father and my mother passed on with their free and not dishonoured son from the court with Miriam May.

Even Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who no long season before had said, "Well, Tod, really of course there's no doubt about it, this is vexatious to be sure; it would have brought them down a bit if the boy had been punished"—cast aside what was left of the Bath bun with vexation, and then, with a fancy bit of her loud laugh in its highest octave, went up herself, dragging her two friends to say, as Glastonbury had said, "That they were very glad." But in all that, there came to me nothing like the gladness of the girl whose loveliness was now on every lip; and when the night of that day was far spent, and what had passed charged with its many memories, returned in the dark shadows, there was something to me that in its all-absorbing power rose side by side with the thankfulness of the blessing ones, who called me son—the cry "I will save him," "I will speak," came back often in the still night as it had spoken in the sunlight, when she had kneeled by my side: and sleep in its coming found me joying in the spoken joy of Miriam May.

CHAPTER X.

HOW MIRIAM MAY FED A FIRE IN JUNE.

Mrs. DUBBELFAISE on this began to think she might well get in one foot at the Grange. That lady had taken it much to heart that so much which was favourable to me had eventuated out of the late Chudleigh assizes. But whilst Mrs. Dubbelfaise had reckoned perhaps over-anxiously on my conviction, she did not feel that to be any cause why she should let her warmth appear. Indeed, Mrs. Dubbelfaise had arrived some years before at a perfectly comprehensive acquaintance with the art of polite visiting, in all its integrity. She had never, even in seasons of excitement, got into my mother's drawing-room before. She now saw her way into the room through a visit of simulated congratulation.

The heart of Mrs. Dubbelfaise—or whatever might have usurped its functions—was doubled up within her when the thought got hold of her that the law had been cheated of me. But though Mrs. Dubbelfaise could not for many reasons well lay these feelings aside, and the rather as she was moved to let them have their own way, she knew when *not* to give them expression.

As I had evaded the penalties which, as she had it, should have followed the transgression on Mr. Wray's left eye, whilst she wished with an

exceeding fervent wish that I might have been cast into prison, as a member of society she could of course say how much happiness she would have yielded up, had I so been cast in there. This is what Mrs. Dubbelfaise called an evidence of charity; and leastways can society repudiate her judgment.

Under circumstances such as these, it was ordered that a visit of congratulation should be made. Mrs. Dubbelfaise, Mrs. Slim, and Miss Todhunter did after this manner get within the Grange, and they went there in a hack clarence, which stood them in a matter of ten shillings, of which it came to Miss Todhunter that her share was three half-crowns. This perhaps might have been a trifle over a third of the whole, but then Miss Todhunter had certain privileges; she was so affectionately pressed to sit alone with her back to the great white horse; and a lesser liberty than that might very well have accounted for any fancied inequality in the ladies' contributions.

My mother was very glad to see them. Glad, because they had come there to join in her joy for her boy.

"We were *so* pleased," Mrs. Dubbelfaise lifted up her voice to say; "but really, of course there could be no doubt about it." Mrs. Dubbelfaise, it is probable, would have much exceeded even this discipline of herself, had she remembered that she stood there as the fulfilling representative of society.

When these and other pleasant nothings were got over, the great white horse was taken from his bait, and they went back as they had come,

criticising very freely by the way my mother's hospitality. Mrs. Dubbelfaise wondered how it could be, any woman, whose boy had just been delivered by accident out of the dock, should not feel her position. "Miss Todhunter," she said, "I am, I believe, as charitable as most people; but if a bad boy has escaped, really, of course, there's no doubt about it, there is no reason why Mrs. Trevor should sit there, offering her cake and wine, to be congratulated. Tod, dear, you always want such a lot of air."

Miss Todhunter, as was well said, *did* just then, for she had not ridden with her back to the great white horse as a privilege so special, at the cost of seven-and-sixpence, for nothing; and why there was so much to pay she did not know, nor could she calculate it out on her little slate at home, with its little sponge and pencil.

A year later, the withering change which can only be a little while delayed had come over the hearth of my own home. From some continued commercial depression, my father had become no longer a man who was well to do. His constitution had long waited for some wearying care to break it up, and before he would have suffered most, it was in mercy ordered that he passed away. He sank to his rest like a child, with the name of "Arthur" on his lips. I cannot write the honour I owe that father's memory. I never may be poor whilst I can call myself *his* son.

Mr. and Mrs. Stoolman and the undertaker arrived inside the coach together. Mr. Stoolman was a distant relation of my father's, and had no mean character for business habits and commer-

cial integrity. Then was he one of the executors, and whenever it might be, he gave up his services in that capacity, Mrs. Stoolman invariably packed up the little double portmanteau, and held herself ready to go with him.

Mr. Stoolman had, from the time when as a young man he made cash advances to his father at compound interest, followed so many of his dead friends to the grave, that he could get into cemeteries, from his intimacy with the gatekeepers, even at forbidden times. A "thorough man of business" was Mr. Stoolman; and though, as decency provides, he had a pair of gloves on all such occasions at the cost of the bereaved, one pair had shown his grief some sixteen times. The crape he had so accumulated was the foundation of Mrs. Stoolman's family mourning.

The undertaker offered, in his conversational address, the general undertaker mixture of familiarity and sympathy. He had taken out, with some success, a patent for a leaden coffin, which he said would be found to add considerably to the "comfort of the deceased." It *was* perhaps a trifle more expensive, but then, as he held, "inventors must meet with some equivalent for their inventions."

"I 'ope to sleep myself in one," said the undertaker, whose opportunities for a preparation for that change were, of course, as with all undertakers out of the common, "in the 'ope of a joyful resurrection." The undertaker's present fulness of joy was pre-eminently because he had well ascertained that he could make whatever charge he pleased.

My mother was executrix, and Mr. Stoolman and Mr. Banco trustees and executors. After the funeral, and after lunch, and after Mrs. Stoolman had read the epitaph that she had done in verse, the event of the day drew on, and the will and fourteen codicils were read aloud by the attorney-at-law, Mrs. Stoolman, whose eyes had long been very red—I do not impute that she had in any way been crying—giving out with astonishing firmness that she expected nothing. The attorney-at-law, whilst he could admire such discipline, spoke many words of comfort to keep up her spirits. “She never did think,” she said, “of such things;” but whilst the reading of the will and fourteen codicils was being carried on downstairs, it became a matter of observation that if Mrs. Stoolman expected nothing, such an expectation did not find her entirely unmoved.

Although the weather was very cold, that lady had got herself into such a perspiration as would have done more towards the death of any shivers than any preparation of sweet nitre. She had, however, come there a long way chiefly to comfort my mother, and she took the opportunity when she became a little cooler, to draw some very beautiful truths from the “uncertainty of human life.” Mrs. Stoolman also drew things other than that from the uncertainty of detection, and within four-and-twenty hours of her arrival, had appropriated many little things which she declared her “dear departed friend” had desired might remain with her.

There was of course no saying that this had not been so. But then when what she carried

away grew to a great size, there was no saying that it had. Mrs. Stoolman, too, remarked, as she got the relics in her reticule, that "they were little things of no intrinsic value, but evidences to her of the regard of her dear old friend." Now, Mrs. Stoolman, it has been affirmed, had long been wanting that on which she seized; but then such was the excess of Mrs. Stoolman's sorrow, that, as it well might be, she knew not what she said. Indeed, it only just stopped short of that intensity which could in any way prevent her from knowing what she took.

"Well, my dear," said her husband, as he entered the room, decently apparelled in the coat that had survived the sorrows of those sixteen funerals, "your excellent friend has left you a thousand pounds."

The lady evidently at this showed symptoms of a wish to cry; but farther than that it was impossible to say, from the after-manner of Mrs. Stoolman, whether she thought the money any equivalent for the loss of her excellent friend. "She wanted him back," she said, looking towards the window, through which she could see a little bit of what she called his "everlasting home," but "perhaps he was better where he was, dear man."

In the end, she reasoned with a resignation that might have been susceptible to explanation, and with a reiteration as to her getting her dear friend back, very little to the purpose, when the wish had so definite a reference to one in the undertaker's leaden coffin.

Mrs. Stoolman being at length persuaded to

see that this was so, disposed of her mind after a different manner, and lent it to the consideration of how six per cent. might be got out of the money.

My father willed that on the death of my mother, and before, if necessary, the Grange should be let for a term of years, as from the then state of his affairs, he believed such prudence to be expedient. Mrs. Stoolman and her husband, as they had two changes of mourning with them, after a little general pressing, stopped on for a few days. The lady more than once in that interval, calling on the dead in a decided manner to come back. She even did so in an attitude of much emotion, as her husband was paying the undertaker's bill—the discount whereof was his, the undertaker reckoning himself amongst his private friends. It however came to pass, that the patentee of so comfortable a coffin took the expression much too literally, and was at some pains to explain at length, that the patent of his invention rested its claim on such an impossibility.

“There was no ventilation, no escape,” he said, but Mrs. Stoolman would not hear him out. That lady after this was a very little more resigned, and those who saw her half-way home could not remember having seen any visibly affecting evidences of grief.

It was just eighteen months from that day, before Mr. and Mrs. Stoolman set out upon the road to Glastonbury Grange again. Mrs. Stoolman smoothed down her crape, and Mr. Stoolman pulled out his gloves; it might be both would yet

be wanted. An agonizing and acute disease had long held its own over my beautiful and uncomplaining mother. Physicians in companies of two and three had taken their fees, and agreed in a manner that did honour to the profession, that they should come again, though nothing could be done. Then was it, for the first time, I came to feel that there was one state more desolate even than the fatherless. My mother, not because she had no confidence in Mr. Banco, but because she did not feel very warmly towards a congregation of codicils, had made her own will. It was written in all on three sides of a sheet of letter-paper; and having therein appointed Mr. Banco and Mr. Stoolman executors, left all over which she had any disposing power between my brother and myself.

When Mrs. Stoolman arrived, she soon got to hear of this. That was in no way very remarkable, as not one of the least of the objects of her mission was to see and hear about it. Mr. Stoolman carried with him the four shilling pair of gloves, and Mrs. Stoolman brought her complement of crape in case of some contingency. The little will, from various causes, was not such as Mrs. Stoolman could in any way approve. Mrs. Stoolman felt she could have liked a little administrative power to have been vested in herself. She had through eighteen years looked with no very loving eye on me. Indeed, one of Mrs. Stoolman's objects in coming so far, was to get what power she might into her own hands, to use against me as could be afterwards arranged; and out of this little will came none.

So Mrs. Stoolman, who was fruitful in such matters, took to some contriving. Confidentially, and of course affectionately, she brought the size and purpose of my mother's testamentary disposition at some length before Mr. Banco, urging on that gentleman, with her muchness of energy, to enlarge its scope on foolscap. Mr. Stoolman, by reason of his being a family solicitor, and if for no other, thought that in so great a thing he might intrude; but a man of Mr. Banco's position would have forfeited every claim on our regard as a regular practitioner, had he come with foolscap anywhere about him. He, of course, took brief.

Mrs. Stoolman undertook to introduce the matter, and to this end I was disposed of, by some contrivance, for a while. Mrs. Stoolman, when the day was not far spent, as though by accident, produced the little will, and approached her object by saying, "By the bye, Mr. Banco, I may as well tell you, as you have come, that our dear friend here, without your good advice, has made *a* will;" and Mrs. Stoolman laid much stress on the indefinite article, as she could feel the instrument before her was not to be *the* will. This so said, the lady smiled as she held up the offending paper. Mr. Banco got it all into his own hands, as a family solicitor well might under such circumstances, and proceeded there and then to condemn it. It was informal, and he could not sanction such a disposition of her property, as he was sure she would desire. "It is too brief, my dear lady, very much too brief; brevity, we always say in our profession, is an excellent

thing. We always act on this. Of course I—I only advise, but it would be the safer plan to put your testamentary disposition into some more comprehensive form.”

Mrs. Stoolman and Mr. Banco formed a tolerably strong confederacy. My mother had been told her will might be in peril, and there was no reason why this should be, when it so happened that Mrs. Stoolman had seen that Mr. Banco was provided with an abundance of draft-paper. “In the name of God, Amen,” it began, and near towards the bottom of the eighth brief-sheet it was safely considered it might end.

There was certainly some little change thought necessary, other than mere length. Out of a charming little scene did it come, that Mrs. Stoolman heard herself written down executrix; and out of another, that her daughter was to take five hundred pounds; and yet out of another, that she herself became the hinge on which all things were to turn. After the draft of this had been held to be satisfactory, it possessed the critical and compassing mind of Mrs. Stoolman, that through the agency of such a codicil as might be very well matured, she could do me a turn.

Mrs. Stoolman had had such a large experience of young men; and on that occasion all this was got together, and put in as evidence, that young men at my age were so often led away. It might have been made more satisfactory had Mrs. Stoolman entered into certain explanations; but that lady left the destination of those so led away undescribed.

“I was so fond,” she said, in a manner which

was believed to partake of pity, "of saying what I thought of people. This might be honest," she admitted, "but society must be protected. Young men," she continued, "oftener went wrong—that is after the manner indicated by Mrs. Stoolman—between eighteen and twenty-five, than any other age;" what she said "was for the best," when she advised my mother that such property as might come to me, should remain with trustees, until I was twenty-five.

There could be no reasonable doubt, as Mrs. Stoolman had well said, that danger does arise to the bodies and souls of young men at the age she specified. But, perhaps, her own experience had of that sort not been exactly practical. Mrs. Stoolman had been, in a measure, in years, before she met with Mr. Stoolman, who himself had been some time rid of the disabilities of youth. But then it was quite true what that lady had said, that I did speak what I thought of people; and, more than this, what I had thought had been so said of Mrs. Stoolman.

There are a very few dying women who would not do as my mother did. All the unnumbered perils of temptation summoned by Mrs. Stoolman in a great procession came upon the scene, and it is strange how such things overtake and move us, when the physicians have even ceased to take their fees, not because their consciences will not permit them to consult, but by reason that the attorney has come to draw the will. It was not—I believed it then, I know it now—that my mother's faith in me grew less, but that the evidence of everything was plainer, and she saw

temptation as it had never risen up before. As the far-off shore stretching out beyond some seas seems nearing, when the signs of the heavens point to change, so does to us the world's unprofitable emptiness proclaim its every mockery before the making ready for the grave. The face never before so beautiful, so near to death, was turned to Mrs. Stoolman. "It is not," spoke those quivering lips, "that I do not trust my boy, still, seeing what I see, I cannot trust the world. But a dying woman thanks you for your friendly care."

Mrs. Stoolman could have wished that "friendly" had not been the chosen word; she liked not that which had a mocking sound to her. But Mr. Banco, with a family solicitor's purpose full upon him, had come near them to say, that the codicil was drawn, and that many years ought to be put between me and my inheritance. After this my mother, though she rallied for a season, seemed to be sinking fast.

Three clerks who held a rapid pen were borrowed at rather more than the regulate rate a folio from the nearest town attorney, and were got on to copy the will. Mrs. Stoolman had some time before sent to the butcher and bought, or rather ordered, two feet of a strong bull calf which was lately deceased, and boiled them down herself. This she thought was very self-denying, as it was maintaining life against her nearest interests. She very nicely calculated the sustaining power of the jelly. Mr. Banco, she had ascertained, would be ready in an hour, meanwhile Mrs. Stoolman—who was always in possession of all her faculties—with an eye to business,

went to put the little will away, until the proper time should come for its destruction.

Well, within the time had the three clerks carried out their engagement, and the last will and testament, with one codicil annexed thereto, of Marian Trevor had been executed.

A few minutes after, I met Mr. Mountaigne leaving the silent room. He did not know I had seen him so pass on. The strong man within him was shaken, for he had seen the great change which was coming over her whom all things loved; and felt that for a short season he must be alone to bear it. With bated breath, I passed into the darkened room, but my footfalls fell upon her ear; she turned her face towards me, and though a weary while has come and gone since then, its undying memory now seems struggling back. It was the loveliness that took no tint from time, but on which the shadows of the Unseen seemed to rest. It was all June beyond. My mother lay at the open window; Windermere stretched out beneath, between its paradise of hills. She raised herself up, and held out her arms—the arms that for those eighteen years had never closed against me. I lived my life again, when I saw those dear arms stretched out there. I had struggled to believe till then that I could give her up, but I had faced death now, and I found it not in me to say, “*Thy* will be done.”

I fell down by her side, and strove to bear up, till she said, “All things, Arthur, *here* must part.” Part! give *her* up! leave *her* in the pit! I do not think I thought of that—I did not dare.

The mother could not smile again if she ever

came to think upon her darling in the grave. *She* thinks of it in heaven. When the loveliness of death lies there before us, lovelier in the coming of decay than ever in its life, we raise up a mighty strength to stay the hand that would shut its beauty out from us for ever. We do not see corruption in its infinite beauty. We do not think of clay, of dust, of worms. A God of mercy keeps back that. The mother if she thought of this would never give her darling to the grave, but clutch corruption to her breast. The husband could never yield up the wife, and many a frenzied man in agony would beat upon the coffin-lid until he reached the clay—clay! and we start back as we set our teeth against the world that calls it clay. It is not that to us, this loveliness which grows more lovely as decay creeps on. Who has not stood some sacred time before a corpse and felt “I can praise God for even this that is lying here, but I could smile by the cold, still, silent thing, if by a great mercy it might be that through these summers and winters that remain to me it should lie here still. I could feel no more the rending sorrow that it had spoken its last word, when I could come out of the world, and sit by its side, and feel that still the substance of the thing I loved was left.” We could feel warm by that icy chill. We have a joy left, that from us it has not been taken utterly. By the summons to the last look when all that was ever beautiful sleeps its sleep of marble beauty, it is then that the harrowing, crushing agony, beyond which man is not asked to suffer here, is gathered up as the coffin-lid shuts from us all, it may be,

that we ever loved, and leaves us alone by our own shadows there in the world, calling on that coffin to give up the clay. Clay at that parting we do not feel it is; God's own mercy comes between that sorrow, and the ever comfort we may cling to in the memory.

I could see the change was taking to itself my mother fast. She asked for air, and I raised her in my arms to look out—as she would never look again—on what she had so loved beyond. She told me all that she had done, but I could not reproach her then. She spoke of all her love, her trust—words which I hung on, when she spoke them—and then of the meeting that would be when “the great Fire” should have come by-and-by.

After a while she started up, and said, “Arthur, I have heard such music;” and whilst I knew that the music she heard was such as I could not hear then, I had almost thought, that what so came to her on that breeze, had a melody like as though it might have swept the harps of angels. But there was a struggle in those lips to speak. I stooped to catch the last words which had languished into the whisper which was to cease so soon, and she said, “Arthur, I have wronged you, it is *not* my will.”

Then was spoken the blessing too sacred to be written here, the blessing which no man can face the world and do without; and then as in a dream she spoke of what she saw, which was not like what I could see; and then that the music had come nearer as of many harps; and then that she walked with those who played those

harps; and then—THE GREAT SLEEP HAD COME OVER HER.

I had never stood by death before; but something told me that I was standing by it then. The eyes were fixed, the mouth was open, and as I looked out, I could see the undertaker cross the lawn. That gentleman's coming had its origin in Mrs. Stoolman's generous forethought. She had told him how things stood; and as there was discount to her on what he might do, to be had from the arrangements, it was necessary that no one else should filch from him what he called on his cards the "melancholy pleasure." Of course his story went that "he had just dropped in, as he was in the neighbourhood."

Mrs. Stoolman, whose feelings in a general way were much disciplined, believed she might be "very shocked." "It would be a beautiful corpse, but she was favourable to her friends dying in their beds," that lady said, as she called up the masculine woman who laid out the dead. Mrs. Stoolman, with great and evident tenderness, then produced two five-shilling pieces, and having closed my mother's eyes, laid the plate upon them. Mrs. Stoolman kept that money for the purpose, but had she known how matters would eventuate, it is possible those crowns would have been baser coins.

I looked on at the busy woman, and turned away to leave, as the hireling had been brought up to lay out my mother for the grave.

As I passed through the door, Miriam May—her face betraying a bright joy—stood in my path. I would have passed on, for then I did not well

like that smile, when she touched my hand, and motioning silence, beckoned me to follow her. I know not how it was, I let her lead me on till I stood with her in a little room which for many years had not been used. She pointed to the hearth, where I could see there had been, no long time back, a fire. "*It* would have wronged you," she said. "I heard *her* say so, and I burnt it; it can't wrong you now."

I knew not from her speech or manner what she meant. She took me aside, and in a few words explained all.

Miriam May had seen Mr. Banco brought up to make the will. She had seen Mrs. Stoolman with a cheerful countenance follow the attorney; and she had, though no eavesdropper, heard that lady threaten aloud what, if things turned out as they should, she hoped to do for me. So Miriam May had gone up before them, and hidden herself, and heard all.

She had seen where the little will was put by Mrs. Stoolman, and where, after a while, the great will and the little codicil were put by Mr. Banco. She had possessed herself of both; the one she now held in her hand, the other she had so burned that nothing of it all was left. A crime, grave in the law's eye, it may have been; but I was not sorry then that Miriam May had in that manner fed a fire in June. I could see her as she had kneeled by my side in the Crown Court at Chudleigh assizes, and had said, "I can save," and had saved; and I felt that this was the second time Miriam May had come between me and a fall. She had never

forgotten, in all the years which had gone by, that I would never let one word be said against her mother unrebuked.

I took her hand in mine; we had rarely met of late, and the loveliness of eighteen still spoke—but that it had grown—as it did when she was only eight.

“Miriam,” I said, “my mother would have blessed you, had she lived, for this;” and I might have strained her lips to mine, but that I looked up, and in a great glass saw I was a man; and saw her as I never had before. I dropped her hand—my heart spoke only what it felt in words, for the face of Miriam May was no longer to me as the face of a little child.

CHAPTER XI.

SHYING AT THE COLLAR.

MISS STOOLMAN, when she came to hear from her mamma of what had happened, was all for attending the funeral; but her mother, who had in her time studied such things, thought sufficient respect might be shown if her daughter breakfasted with the mourners.

Miss Stoolman, after a while, gave in to her mother, and thought so too. There was indeed no depreciating the excellent influences of five hundred pounds; but then Miss Stoolman had nerves, and had once had a fit because some one saw a wasp's nest, without any wasps, two leagues off. The family medical man upon this gave it as his opinion, that if Miss Stoolman in any way objected to an open grave, by no means was she to see one.

Breakfast after a funeral, whereat condolence is allowed to be of an appetizing character, that young lady had her medical adviser's immediate sanction to attend. Hot coffee and devilled meats upon her system had none of the effect of an open grave. Miss Sophonisba Stoolman was naturally of a desponding temperament, and it was held advisable that she should connect herself with gaiety on all possible occasions.

The night before the funeral, Miss Stoolman and her crape accompaniments arrived. There

was just this little difficulty, which might have led to hysteria, but which a very little arrangement prevented. She could not sleep alone with a corpse in the house. She would inevitably have had a fit, so for that night was Mr. Stoolman made a bachelor, and the young lady in the house of death was enabled to get over her apprehensions by clinging to her mother. The next morning it was observed that Mr. Banco ate little or nothing of the preliminary breakfast; he was early satisfied, and then fidgeted with his papers. As time wore on, it became clear he could not sit still, but paced the room anxiously, tying quite an unnecessary number of knots in a remnant of red tape. Mrs. Stoolman, when she saw the solicitor jerk himself about, and beat upon his joints, hoped the sheets had not been damp, "but really, when there was death in the house, there always was so much confusion." Still Mr. Banco, who had slept in a dry bed, yet paced the room, yet jerked himself about, yet was busied with his joints, yet manipulated the piece of red tape. Mrs. Stoolman, who understood what there was to understand of homœopathy, undertook to supplement Mr. Banco's spirits—and thought a little aconite would allay the jerking, which clearly came of fever—if that gentleman would permit her to administer a globule for grief. But the family solicitor was in no humour to trifle with sugar and water, and his uneasiness increased apace until Mrs. Stoolman and her daughter retired to invest themselves in their mourning during the disposal of the dead, in some secrecy to get over, as best they might, their grief, or

calculate the resources of the legacy. Mr. Baneo went to apparel himself in the decent mourning of a family solicitor.

It was observed that Mr. Baneo did not join in the service for the dead as he might. Indeed, the disposition of his thoughts was anywhere but there. He still manipulated the fragment of red tape, and so persistently that he let it drop into the open grave. When "dust went to dust, and ashes to ashes," Mr. Baneo thought but little of the circumstance; but when his red tape followed, his action seemed to imply that he would have got himself into the pit after it. Mr. Baneo was very far indeed from being himself at the late breakfast which followed. Mrs. Stoolman, and Mr. Stoolman, and Miss Stoolman, were so nearly resigned as to have overcome the depressing influences attendant on the many visits of the undertaker. Miss Stoolman made the coffee, but Mr. Baneo would not drink. He fidgeted in his chair, and betrayed all the old jerking symptoms, and by this time had measured out for himself another foot of red tape, which seemed in its way a solace. Mrs. Stoolman, who fancied she had seen through the solicitor, got up and whispered to her husband, "It might be that Mr. Baneo was sorry he had buried a good client." As Mrs. Stoolman was known to be a charitable woman, and only occasionally attributed motives, so the explanation of Mr. Baneo's agitation offered in this whisper may be worth attention.

There is always a struggle for the tea-service after death—if it be china. Now, my mother had left her china equally between Mrs. Stoolman and

Mrs. McGrab, and it was anticipated that by the two o'clock train Mrs. McGrab would arrive. Miss Stoolman was serving the coffee from a miniature set, very much to her taste, so much so that she declared the deceased had some months before made much of her willingness to accept it as a gift. Indeed, the family, whose mourning took its form from what they got, had evidently made much of that occasion months before; for as things were swept up and declared theirs, the explanation of such apparent confiscation was that they had all been given away. So Mr. Stoolman wore my father's best jet studs, and Mrs. Stoolman wore upon her neck my mother's best jet brooch.

As two o'clock came on, Mr. Banco, so far from having more ease in his mind, grew worse. The red tape was no longer a diversion in the hands of the great conveyancer, and at one p.m. he suddenly ceased to jerk himself, and confronting Mr., Mrs., and Miss Stoolman—who were carrying off in convenient little masses what they could, and of course getting together the best of the divisible china for the McGrabs, about which there might perhaps have been a difference of opinion—declared the cause of his uneasiness.

"Mrs. Stoolman," he said, as though he felt he was addressing the more active and responsible member of the family, "it is very extraordinary, but I cannot find *your* will."

Mrs. Stoolman did not exactly see the point. She had made no will. She had always felt that there was time sufficient to bequeath that over which her husband had no disposing power; so

she playfully rallied Mr. Banco on his error, and seemed very pleased it was no worse. Mr. Banco at this turned and faced the lady, placed his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, and said, "I mean, madam, the testamentary disposition the deceased lady made under your good influence."

"Good G—d!" said Mr. Stoolman.

"Good gracious!" said Mrs. Stoolman.

"La, 'ma! how provoking!" said Miss Sophonisba Stoolman.

Mrs. Stoolman's confusion did not last; she rose with the occasion. "Mr. Banco," she said blandly, "for the moment you alarmed me; my nerves are not what they were, but the will of our dear friend is in my care."

"My dear madam," said the family solicitor, wiping his brow, and getting rid of every jerking symptom, "this is a great relief to my mind, and now I think I do remember you did take the deceased's will. Thank you, if you please, Miss Stoolman, your coffee is so excellent, I will take another cup," continued the exhausted and ecstatic attorney.

"It is beautiful plate," said Mrs. Stoolman, who had persuaded the butler to clean that which by her showing fell to her share; "these little trifles," continued that lady, balancing a fork—she knew to an ounce what "these little trifles" weighed—"are small remembrances of our dear friend's; and although we have so much plate, we, of course, equally appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who are gone."

Mrs. Stoolman's little inventory of plate, more,

perhaps, for the sake of description than from choice, was preceded by the distinguishing appellation of "electro;" but she turned the subject with charming delicacy. Miss Stoolman, as she looked through the little coffee cups that were to be hers, declared she should not have come, if she had known how much Mrs. Trevor had thought of her; and Miss Stoolman, evidently overcome by her feelings, put down the cups, and was busied for a little season with her pocket-handkerchief.

After this, Mrs. Stoolman took occasion to slip out of the room, and as that lady in course of time did not return, and as two o'clock was at hand, Miss Stoolman went out to seek her mother. Mrs. Stoolman when lighted on by her child was wallowing in her bed. This might well have been a demonstrative crisis precipitated by the intensity of her grief, but Miss Stoolman seemed to know the symptoms so presented to betray an opposite order of feeling. The contents of the drawers were strewed about the room, and Mrs. Stoolman's nose was bleeding, which escape might have arisen either from a blow, or from emotion. Although Miss Stoolman was known to scream at wasps, black beetles, and naked little boys in their baths, she knew there was nothing to be got out of shrieking, when her only audience was a woman who knew vastly well the value of all such forms of expression.

Mrs. Stoolman turned her face and groaned, and Mrs. Stoolman only groaned for moral causes, when she was disappointed in her monetary calculations, or when Mrs. Mc Grab came in for money.

"Whatever is the matter, 'ma?" said Miss Stoolman, endeavouring by a little easy force to get the prostrate lady round upon her back.

Mrs. Stoolman, at the sound of her child's voice, groaned anew, and wallowed afresh, and then said that which it comforted her to say.

"What is the matter with me? with *me* nothing, but it is everything the matter with you. I have gone and lost the will; and," continued the lady, with every symptom of being in torture, "your five hundred pounds is good for nothing, and that boy will defy me, and I shall have no power at all; but"—here Mrs. Stoolman stayed wallowing, to lift herself up and laugh—"Bella McGrab won't get anything, and will come all the way from London for nothing. I am sure I would lose a dozen wills to see her face when she hears it;" and Mrs. Stoolman, at these and other such considerations, more cheerfully resumed the perpendicular.

"But, 'ma, shall I lose my dear little coffee-cups?" inquired Miss Stoolman, who had prepared a decoction of the berry, with pleasant feelings of appropriation.

"No, child," said her mother—and Miss Stoolman's birthday had long since ceased to be celebrated—"I shall say, Mrs. Trevor *gave* you them; I shan't give up those little things;" and Mrs. Stoolman rattled the plate, for at this crisis a loud ringing at the bell was heard.

"It's Mrs. McGrab," said the young lady.

"Come for her plate," said Mrs. Stoolman, ehuckling—if ladies so refined can chuckle—who

felt for a moment that a dozen wills might have been sacrificed.

"She has come a great way, 'ma," said the young lady, wading up to her mother.

"For nothing," said Mrs. Stoolman, who realized the position, and accepted the point.

"I wonder if she's come in mourning," said Miss Stoolman, almost laughing.

"I wonder if it's all new," quite shrieked Mrs. Stoolman; and this cut both ways, the doubt if it might be new, and the cause for congratulation if it were. As the ladies were after this manner administering the one to the other's cheerfulness, there came a little tap at the door from Mr. Stoolman, to say that Mr. and Mrs. McGrab had arrived, and might, perhaps, like to take something before the will was read.

"I think," said Mrs. Stoolman, very promptly rebuking this encouragement of the appetite of the visitors, "that people should recollect when they are in the house of mourning, we are not here to serve refreshments; go, child, and make coffee."

"La! yes, 'ma, and won't they be vexed, when they know the dear little cups are mine, it will be so nice, won't it?"

This coffee-making child was even the only child of Mrs. Stoolman, and Mr. Stoolman, in his more affectionate moments, would have it, "she took very much after her mother." Be that as it may, the commission to make the coffee in those cups was such as she felt she could like to do.

Mr. and Mrs. McGrab were in deep mourning,

and Mrs. McGrab came out to Miss Stoolman, greeting her in a whisper, with many applications of her handkerchief to her eyes, as she often did with a regular movement, so soon as her bequeathing friends were dead. Miss Stoolman, who was somewhat critical in such matters, could see that Mrs. McGrab's mourning had been contrived out of some sables that lady had been seen to wear on another occasion, and whenever the opportunity might offer, Miss Stoolman determined, with a great strength of purpose within herself, she would be at some pains to let Mrs. McGrab know that she had recognized an old acquaintance.

Mr. McGrab seemed to be wishing to get to business, and see how far he had covered his expenses. Mr. Stoolman, beyond this, was anxious too, but his anxiety meant, as much as anything, to show how little the McGrab influence had been recognized in the disposal of the property.

"Is it long?" asked Mr. McGrab, looking at his watch, addressing the family solicitor.

"Eight sheets and a codi something," volunteered Miss Stoolman, taking the right of answer from her papa and the family solicitor; "it was quite 'ma's idea, it should be so long. 'Ma did all," persisted the young lady—with awkward fluency—who only felt she might be working in her mamma's interest, by contributing to the "taking down" of Mrs. McGrab, when that lady so came to hear of Mrs. Stoolman's influence.

Mr. McGrab moved aside to make a note of this, as in case the testamentary disposition might turn out to his prejudice, the very definite and

detailed evidence of Miss Stoolman would serve a purpose upon oath; and Mrs. McGrab, who because she saw this was in some spirits, merely offered as an opinion, that "Mrs. Stoolman had been a great comfort to the dear deceased," supplementing such opinion by the assertion that "so many people would have profited by the occasion, to secure their own advantage," and pointing out in a pleasant way how much of this sort of thing my mother had escaped, when Mrs. Stoolman entered the room.

Naturally the ladies met half-way, the better to kiss, and to criticise, in one another's minds, one the other's made-up mourning. Each had detected something she had seen before, but each fancied she had in this little matter gone beyond the other; the gentlemen, who through all this were anxious for business, took another glass of the dry wine, and then proposed an adjournment.

"This good lady has the will, and one codicil annexed thereto," said Mr. Banco, who was always the more technical in his diction in proportion as an estate could pay, observing to Mrs. Stoolman, who could not forget, and did not in the least want to forget, that whilst she had lost everything, Mrs. McGrab, who was her "dear friend," had taken nothing.

"The will is lost, and the codicil is lost!" broke out Mrs. Stoolman; "but the child there takes the china and plate as a gift."

"Lost!" ejaculated Mr. Banco, with the proper surprise of a family solicitor; "my good lady, impossible; your grief has overcome your memory. Gentlemen, our friend here of course feels the

loss of the dear deceased still very freshly; the will and codicil are in this house, and must be found."

"Five, ten, five," said Mr. McGrab, to himself, which figures represented the total expenses of that gentleman and his lady from the time of their leaving home up to the present symptoms of the catastrophe. "Good G—d! I shan't get back under a ten pound note."

"We always calculated it at twelve," put in Mrs. Stoolman, encouragingly, who had by this time disciplined herself, and could well enjoy the way in which her friends were moved in the matter.

"Was I mentioned?" timidly ventured Mrs. McGrab.

Mrs. Stoolman whispered in her friend's ear, so that Mr. Banco might not get to hear, "Half the plate, Bella dear, and five hundred pounds."

"The will *must* be proved," said Mrs. McGrab, adopting a form of action which might well have been taken for wringing her hands—"the dear deceased's intentions *must* be carried out;" and as the voice of the lady was lifted up on high, the search for the missing will began.

Now, if the will and codicil could not be found, it was very necessary, so felt Mrs. Stoolman, that the little will should not turn up, for on the second side of that little will did Mrs. McGrab's right to five hundred pounds appear; which bequest Mrs. Stoolman had taken care, quite commensurate with the form of her friendship, was not committed to the second will and codicil. Mrs. Stoolman declared, with an earnestness that brought

the blood to her face, how she had put the will away safely, and had gone an hour afterwards to lock it up. All Mrs. McGrab could get out intelligibly was, that "it was very suspicious." Mr. McGrab said it was "an ugly business." Mrs. McGrab, as the search grew more hopeless, became of opinion that "people's friends in these days, who played friendly parts, were often at best mere felons;" to which Mrs. Stoolman, who in charity repudiated this view, replied, that "she thought her dear dead friend's memory vastly better than her money; but that of course every little thing *was* an object to some people."

Mr. McGrab, who for a great while had spoken nothing, said, "That at an early moment he should consult his solicitor," upon which Mr. Banco was observed to be as though he wished to speak.

From three to six, every corner in the house was searched; after a while even the servants joined, and no one more zealously than Miriam May. Miriam, it may be remembered, had found the little will, and at my wish had kept it to see what a turn things might take.

It was clearly certain of destruction if Mrs. Stoolman could only light upon it. At six o'clock it was determined between us that Miriam May should find it, and suspicion would not rest on her. There first arose a whisper—as whispers will arise where women are predominant—then a more decided movement amongst the anxious seekers for the will, and then Miriam May came up out of the midst as the house resounded with the cry—"The will is found."

Mrs. Stoolman, in a glad form, plunged up to

Miriam May, for she felt that not only was she safe, but that Mrs. McGrab was not. "Give it me, my good girl," she gasped out, and the little will was held aloft by Miriam May.

"*That* is not it," ejaculated Mrs. Stoolman. "I got her to revoke that little irregularity," continued the lady, criminating herself in a manner that was not called for. But as weeks passed on, and the will and codicil could not be found, the little will, which bore date two days before my mother's death, was admitted to proof. Mrs. McGrab, by her husband, gave her discharge for the five hundred pounds, and called to see Mrs. Stoolman, who had herself returned home the next day, incidentally mentioning the circumstance of the payment of the money. This, perhaps, was like a woman; but then Mrs. Stoolman said she was very glad, which in the main was not unlike a woman too.

Mr. Banco, as a family solicitor, had felt that here was presented matter on which to initiate proceedings of a character likely to be of some annoyance to Mrs. McGrab. It was very clear that not only was the little will, which Miriam May had found, not the very last will of Mrs. Trevor, but that the will and codicil, which were, he knew, of later date, must have been got rid of subsequently to the death of the testatrix. Mr. Banco, with this on his mind, took an early opportunity of approaching Mrs. Stoolman with his opinions on the matter. Naturally, what Mr. Banco might get out of the costs if Mrs. Stoolman did oppose the will, was a consideration which might weigh somewhat, but credit must also

attach to the assertion of the interest he took in seeing "right uppermost," wherever it was possible for right to get so situated. Still it was observed, he thought, proportionately less of right when it was understood that the recognized solicitor of the Stoolman family contracted for that interest, by which it was clear he would do a great deal more for 3*s.* 4*d.* than it was professional to do for 6*s.* 8*d.*; and on the third day after the funeral, and about the third hour after knowing this, did Mr. Banco withdraw.

Mr. and Mrs. Stoolman, as was natural, took counsel of their attorney; and this proceeding led to a threat, somewhat later, of opposition to the little will; but it all came to nothing. Mrs. McGrab reminding her friend that Mr. Banco had intimated that the will and codicil came of "a very little influence." "You know, dear," said that lady, "it was called *your* will." Mrs. Stoolman well recollected this, and recollecting it, and seeing that the cheap attorney would be of all the only one who would take anything by the motion, answered her in the same loving spirit, and said, "Well, dear, I would rather lose a dozen wills than one friend." So under this arrangement the one friend was maintained.

Mrs. McGrab, as has been said, was a legatee under the will to the extent of five hundred pounds, and on the day it was discharged, Mrs. McGrab, as has been recorded, made the friendly visit, which has been spoken of, to Mrs. Stoolman, on her way to her banker, and when there, as if by accident, became concerned to know whether the cheque could have got out

of the little pocket in which she kept such things, by her bosom.

"Oh yes, dear! it's all right; here it is;" and so all the purpose of Mrs. McGrab's visit was fully served, as Mrs. Stoolman had herself beheld the cheque.

It was the fourth day after my mother's funeral that Mr. Stoolman, who even under the little will acted as my guardian, desired to speak with me. When I entered the room, Mr. Stoolman, who was what is best known and appreciated as "a thorough man of business," had conveyed his person away to the least comfortable chair that presented itself, seeming as much at home in his position as a lawyer's clerk. Mr. Stoolman greatly believed in stools for "young men;" it was in his experience that they "conduced to business habits." It might be that instruments for sitting had been designed of a more comfortable character, but then Mr. Stoolman never yet knew comfort yield a dividend. The faith which was in him was such as enjoys a very large recognition. He believed all "young men should have one object and one ambition. He was all against young men thinking for themselves. He had known restless young men slip off a stool, where they might have well been pinnaced for life, and the worst things come of the proceeding. An excellent man of business was Mr. Stoolman, with many excellent disciples.

I have not introduced Mr. Stoolman here as a caricature. Mr. Stoolman is many degrees removed from presenting materials or a laugh. Ninety-nine ordinary men out of every hundred

ordinarily think with Mr. Stoolman, that the great aggregate of youth is to be disposed of according to a variety of respectable general rules. From some aspiration held to be inexplicable, the hundredth may object to the assignment. He may feel himself a degree or more above the lawyer's copying clerk, or the merchant's stool, or the little side bureau in Capel-court. These may be offered him as the only alternative which he can hope will get him recognition as a "steady man." It is of all things very necessary that we should have young men serving lawyers under the pretext of serving themselves, or of learning what may be necessary to the salting of invoices, or of acquiring the high morality of some of our dealers in public securities. But the minds that lead a nation fret before these common things. They may be "business-like," quite likely, but it is of necessity that our laws should keep them moral. The error is that the genius of the world can be fastened down where commercial mediocrity the best succeeds. Intellect refuses to be satisfied, if it does not fail in trade. It must take its part in the struggle, that its country may not fail before the world. The great dealer, the great attorney, the great merchant, is not the great man. What in his success he becomes to others, comes of the forgetfulness of what he acquires for himself. The youth of a nation cannot after this manner declaim before the parent or the guardian, "Before all you offer me I would have fame." The parent or guardian would show in a multitude of ways that fame is not of the nature of business; and perhaps with unnecessary iteration, that busi-

ness never leads to fame. They will not take thought that ninety-nine out of a hundred are well content to become the creatures of the counting-house, to become "business-like," to rock the days of their meridian on a stool, and to contribute to themselves. They set aside the hundredth who would the rather contribute to his country.

Parents and guardians, when the boy who has weighed well all that is offered points to where great names in literature, in church or state, have culminated, and says, "I would learn to be what that man has become," feel that the expression of such thoughts means practically a disavowal of all "business habits." It is endeavoured to meet this, which, if persevered in, must necessarily lead to the rending asunder of the whole system—by which youth is brought to carry on that which it befits them least to carry out—by making a note that the boy who wants this fame is the boy who comes in the end to want a dinner. The man of business has a great liking to dine with his friends in a regular way. He does not object to breaking bread with a famous man, if the position of the famous man is well assured. But he of all things would the least be himself if called upon to dine a man who had always meant to be famous, but had only got to be hungry. The symptoms that the most delight a parent's or a guardian's heart are, to see the boy dissenting nothing from taking his place in the general groove, with an eager start getting to business with his breakfast in his throat; not that he may make the better citizen of this or of another world, but that he may stimulate his own selfishness by making money, and so

cast in his lot with the hordes who become respectable by overreaching their own kind.

A father or a guardian would the rather see the boy asking no questions on his stool, "sticking steadily to business," than hear him say, "Father, I will be high up there." The father looks out, and beyond, and wonders where his boy would climb.

There have been many climbers such as these, who for their country left the counting-house, and who by reason of such following have been cut off with the shilling. The world recognizes the attorney-at-law from the day that he is first devoted to the stool. The man who writes, to whom no such conventional apprenticeship is given, may stand by himself through every edition of want till he claims recognition through the editions of his book. And who stands the higher in the group when we reckon up our worthies the spectre who has gnawed his own flesh-belongings in a garret, or the attorney-at-law who began and ended on a stool?

Mr. Stoolman in these matters held pre-eminently the opinions of "a thorough man of business." Beyond this, that gentleman had ascertained that if for a five years' service I meted out to Mr. Banco some five hundred pounds, and—as was represented to me to be very regular—became his convenience, Mr. Stoolman was thereout to have his percentage, whilst I was to get much of the earlier rank of a "man of business," whatever that might be. Mr. Stoolman made this proposal, as so excellent a man would, "entirely for my benefit; he liked to see

young men "sticking to business;" it was d—d nonsense for young people to talk about becoming great men; more elderly people thought differently. The law," he continued, "was not a barren employment; professional men who give advice received some consideration for such advice, regulating it by a liberal scale of charges, which was certainly not altogether of an unprofitable character. We should all learn, when we are young, to stick to business, for I am assured, that even in the next world, such excellent habits will be turned to some account."

Indeed, there is no reason to doubt that Mr. Stoolman did himself believe in some such method being in force during the millenium; and that he thought all the higher of his future prospects when some popular preacher, who was out collecting money, led him on to hope that for the deserving there might be even stools in Paradise.

When Mr. Stoolman had had his say, I told him I thought of going to Oxford for three years, and then prepare myself for Parliament, as I feared the Church was out of the question.

Mr. Stoolman had no authority to prevent this, so his opposition would be perfectly harmless. He smiled, and it showed the discipline he was under, that he should, when he thought of what would befall his percentage on the five hundred pounds; and he observed paternally, "My dear boy, young men should stick to business"—Mr. Stoolman invariably opened all his greater recitations in this fashion—"Parliament can only help to spend your money; young people all think it well to be famous, but, my dear boy, *we* know

what that means ; get rid of such ideas, they play the deuce with business."

In that Mr. Stoolman had said this, he had undoubtedly spoken well. A boy who holds by such ideas would fret himself to death on an attorney's stool. But my guardian here became more confidential, and whispered such great things of the future, as that Mr. Banco might, at the expiration of my term of service, take me into partnership ; and Mr. Stoolman ranked that contingency as the next best thing to my dying early, and going straight to heaven. Indeed, like any other curator of the young, he would have thought he brought me within the influence of a most distinguished destiny, had Mr. Banco, after payment of the five hundred pounds, not declared his liberal intentions of making me the sharer of his reputation as a man of business, and of what had come by it, and had I taken up a position as a meanly-salaried clerk.

"There are so many who live for business, Mr. Stoolman," I replied, "that I can very well be spared ; I would rather live for something higher."

"Higher !" almost shrieked Mr. Stoolman, whose dignity was sacrificed to his compassion ; "higher ! good G—d ! and pray what may be higher ? I suppose you will begin to write ; *that* is not business, my dear boy."

Mr. Stoolman was not peculiar in his opinion, if he was paternal in expressing it ; but he fancied he had made it clear to me that he meant it all for the best. As he would have ceased to be responsible for me on my return from Oxford, I

thanked him, and begged he would believe I should ponder on what he had so brought before me; and of a truth, the more I pondered, the more was it to the prejudice of those prospects which he believed he could make mine.

I early got myself away. He had held up the harness—that harness in the which so many of the young see nothing but a blight in age. He had held that up to me, and found me SHYING AT THE COLLAR.

CHAPTER XII.

LOST AND WON; OR, HOW THE TWO P.'S DID IT.

I WAS some way in my twenty-second year, before I took my degree. Soon after the death of my mother, Miriam May and her mother had left the Grange, and with what resources Mrs. May during eighteen years had got together, went to appeal to the public as milliners and dressmakers at Great Glastonbury.

As the mother of Miriam May passed up the leading thoroughfare, she held back where she had once held back to read a play-bill years before, perhaps to rest, perhaps to think, over against the door of the little theatre. All seemed just the same as it was when the stranger had so stared from the box on the stage, and the little town had come to Evelyn Mervyn's feet. She looked at Miriam and passed on. A thought had come, but it had not stayed; she feared what might come to her child with the golden hair if another note should fall upon that stage; and at nightfall Miriam May and her mother had taken two rooms in the busiest, and what was held to be the "genteelest," quarter of the town.

Ten days later I had called there to see them, and had found a brass plate, with "Mrs. May, milliner and dressmaker," on the door. From that day, for three years and six months, I had neither heard from or heard of them. Miriam

had promised that from time to time she would write and tell me how the world had served them, but no letter ever came, and it was not until I had some time graduated that I set foot again in Glastonbury.

It was on the third day after taking my degree, that, falling in with the *Morning Post*, I saw the member for Great Glastonbury had been thrown many feet out of a tandem, and east on to his head, leaving whatever brains he had—for the first time brought to light—about the road. The particulars of this calamity were—after an approach to a biographical sketch of the deceased diner-out, which necessarily to some extent suffered in the absence of any legitimate materials—followed by an affectingly exact description of what amount of brains had been got together by some intelligent constable: any amount being on the side of the account that was new to Great Glastonbury. The paragraph then went on to announce, that after what remained of the remains of the late member had been carried away to go through the proper “obsequies,” a contest for the representation of the borough might be looked for between Lord Diskount, eldest and only son of the patron Earl of Glastonbury, and Mr. Le Poer Bubb, whose local influence had the reputation not only of being great, but of being of an accumulative character.

Lord Diskount, I had reason to know, had been at Cambridge, or, perhaps, it were better said, he had been incidentally at Cambridge when he was not at Newmarket. He was much of my own age, perhaps a few months younger, and although

he knew Glastonbury as well as any one might a place they had never known for any time, Lord Diskount, it seemed, had a great deal to say, and was on the point of saying a great deal more, which bore immediately on his intimacy with all classes in the borough.

As Lord Diskount wrote about one class, there was clearly no reason against his making much of his familiarity with all classes. Lord Diskount had for precautionary considerations been committed to influences other than those of Glastonbury ever since he had worn spencers; and certain of these considerations had not a little interfered with his return. Some five years before, he had ridden for the Glastonbury Welter cup, gentlemen joekeys "up," but there were appearances about his horse and his manner of riding which were never quite held to be explained away.

Mr. Le Poer Bubb, whose local influence in his address was made conspicuous, came of a cotton-spinning interest. He had some ten years before come to Glastonbury on a Saturday afternoon, inquiring for a house, on a white cob mare. The object of this excursion only transpired when he happened to be asked what he might be looking for. "I want the biggest house in the place," he said, and in the end he could only be satisfied that Glastonbury had one at all in which there seemed room for him "to swing his cat."

Both the candidates were what are called "Liberals," although what they each professed was of a very different complexion. They were both for the people, and in that direction were prepared to go whatever distance might secure the liberty of the

populace or their own election. There was, indeed, a basis of agreement here ; but Mr. Le Poer Bubb went the farthest. Lord Diskount affected to believe that we owed everything to the people. Mr. Le Poer Bubb contended that without the people, as a nation, we should have taken nothing. Lord Diskount was for "civil and religious liberty," and "reform," and "the amelioration of the condition of the working classes," and whatever else as pleasant it in any way occurred to him it might be well to mention. It was beyond me to see what could well come to Lord Diskount by his saying this. His whole career, so far as it was known, had been against every one who was beneath him in what is called "the social scale;" his heel had been ever planted on the poor. But then I had a great deal more to learn than was presented in the address of Lord Foxmore's son. Under special legal advantages he had got the phrases of his party put into form for him, and no one had a much greater contempt for those who were at some pains to believe in him, than Lord Diskount himself.

No sooner in these days do the representatives of parliamentary parties, in counties or in boroughs, try their strength, than what is called the "Liberal" candidate, writes very much indeed as Lord Diskount wrote. An equivocation is implied in the very name he bears, but it might be well if the prostitution of all honesty was arrested here. Such men as Lord Diskount, who believe "the people" so much dirt, are well content to obtain a seat in Parliament, by appearing before "the people" with the most extravagant

expressions of regard for what are called the "working classes."

"I am a Liberal," he says, and if you let him, he will in an eager manner carry out what this very pleasant term conveys; and he will then, at greater or less length, explain himself, after the fashion in which he has been taught to express himself; and even such a man as Lord Diskount will undertake to say, and will say, "I am for reform—I am for progress—I am for the people—I am for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes."

The bearing of all this is, that any one who may object to an exhibition after this sort in a public place is not all that such a man as Lord Diskount had declared himself to be. The necessity for this sort of transparency may be very apparent; but it may still be questioned how much of this kind of thing any national character can bear.

I had always believed I revered the people, and I had never quite come to see how any one could be *against* "reform," or "progress," or "the amelioration of the condition of the unenfranchised classes." I could go, were I so minded, and write all Lord Diskount had so written, and more like to it by the length of a street; I could profess all that he by his lawyer professed; but I knew that in all this he had witnessed very falsely. I knew that in every phrase there spoke a lie; and here, if my knowledge was not indifferent, here my ignorance began.

I felt that I would go to the people—the people in whose midst I had become a grown man, and

I would ask them to weigh me even as they had known me, with Lord Diskount even as they had known him. But because I should so do this I would not say "I am for the people." Could they believe I came to mock them as a scourge, for that, and more than that, they must believe if I were not. I would not go into their midst, and say, "I am for reform—I am for progress," for Lord Diskount could say that; and who was I, that I should set myself up to challenge what was of nature, and defy what there inevitably must be?

I had felt that I could love the people, as indeed I did, and would the better like to see them lifted higher than they were. I had never felt it was for man to say he was against reform or progress, any more than he should say, "I am against one day dying and going to the grave, and thereafter coming to be judged."

If Lord Diskount could say all this, I, knowing what he was, felt I might not be a "Liberal." I did not know then that it has been endeavoured—as with some success it is endeavoured still—to establish the distinction between two parliamentary connections, that the one is for the people, and for reform, and progress, because it has gotten to itself the name of "Liberal," with a monopoly to trade upon these things, and that the other is as a curse against them, because it hesitates to give itself a reputation founded on a phrase. I only knew that he who had never spoken of the people but to curse them, pointed to his faith in their ascendancy. Beyond this in profession I felt I might not go.

Lord Diskount is not a fiction ; he has lived the life that never brought him near the people but to hate them, and he has many seasons spoken those words beyond which the agitator has not passed, and—if he would—the liberator could not go. I believed that the emasculated man who had so lived, and yet who could so speak, would be torn down and thrown back in strips when he came to stand before the people. I had a good deal to learn then. I did not know that a system had obtained by which a political party that has had its traditions and its martyrs, in these latter days has gotten to the front by its professions ; and in the years that have come between, the knowledge of this, in turn, has passed to me, but it was all strange then ; and, without reading the manifesto of Mr. Le Poer Bubb, I sat down to tell Glastonbury that the lowest to me amongst them was as the highest, and that I did not love the people less, because, as Lord Diskount was a “ Liberal,” I could only come to feel that I was not.

It did seem to me that the part Lord Diskount bore in this was very small. The patron earl of Glastonbury felt, as such patron earls will feel, that, come what might of it, his son must be got to stand, and be got in. No matter if that son did curse the people on the hustings, he might “ be the people’s friend.” Therefore was it that a parliamentary agent was ordered by the earl, at any cost, to do this little thing, and he it was who wrote what I had read, which, written, he, for the sake of form, had asked Lord Diskount if his lordship did approve it.

What Lord Diskount understood—which was in no manner a moiety—he pleasantly said, was “cursed false;” what was most false he could not understand.

“What am I for?” inquiringly asked the son of the Whig patron earl, “if any one should ask me.”

To which the parliamentary agent, who knew every inch of his position, replied, “My lord, it may be convenient to remember that there are two P.’s—your lordship is for ‘progress’ and the ‘people.’”

“But, dam’ee,” said the candidate, busying himself with soda-water, for he was but just from his bed, whither he had gotten himself as the day began to dawn, “I hate the people; and as for progress, egad, I don’t know what it means.”

The parliamentary agent, whose profession meant that he should conquer such difficulties, had known other situations such at this arise out of the two P.’s, where in the end he had carried his candidate.

“My lord, that is no objection; it is neither necessary that you should love the one, nor understand the other, but it is very necessary, my lord, that you should *say* you do.”

“Oh, I can tell a lie, if *that’s* all!” said the more likely of the people’s candidates.

“Why—why, it’s not exactly that, my lord,” said the parliamentary agent, who in these matters went for nice distinctions, and was always for keeping up the moral character of electioneering; “only in these days, if you are not for progress and the people, you see, my lord, you must be a

Conservative; it carries an election, and is very simple—it will all turn on the two P.'s."

"There may be a dozen, if you will just put them down," said Lord Discount, who was not fluent; "and just add," he continued, "whether I'm to be for or against them, for the cursed people will put those two infernal P.'s right out of my head."

But the manifesto of Mr. Le Poer Bubb, which was certainly neither insignificant in the matter of its length, nor its large comprehensiveness, should not be overlooked.

It was the real thing; and then there was a great deal got into a little bit at the end, concerning the coercion of "certain noblemen," which might of course have suggested itself to Mr. Le Poer Bubb, on hearing that the son of the Whig patron earl was in the field. Mr. Le Poer Bubb, who hated earls and bishops very badly, and who, because he hated strawberry-leaves, refrained himself from strawberries, had no longer any direct interest in the cotton trade. Indeed, Mr. Le Poer Bubb had early conceived a liking for the people, and in such a manner did the passion move him, that when the cry of the "big loaf" was first put up, Mr. Le Poer Bubb became as a wanderer with these loaves about him for the good of "the people." If, as he said, he filled the "bellies of the masses," it was clear that he did not contemporaneously do indifferently for himself. When it got to be believed that the big loaf was safe, and its size secured, Mr. Le Poer Bubb, who had not the while been neglecting himself, was requested to receive a deputation at his house,

which he very graciously listened to, having with proper precaution bidden his butler see that they wiped their boots, for "it was bad enough to be obliged to have the people about you, but it was intolerable when they came with their dirt and spoiled your carpets."

It did not perhaps occur to Mr. Le Poer Bubb, as a "Liberal," that what he had got out of the people at divers times might well have paid for many carpets. Mr. Le Poer Bubb, who had lunched first, and had had the luncheon put away, received the "people" with very considerable affability. He began by assuring them there were no moments to him such as these. The deputation would have liked the moments better had there been the means of sitting. It had been the object of his life "to struggle for the working man;" he had sacrificed all the best years of his prime to that "working man;" and "when God came to judge him, he hoped his everlasting would be portion with the 'working man.'" One of the deputation, whose boots were largely infected with the soil, here showed symptoms of a desire to articulate, and cast his great feet up and down in a shuffling manner, which caused Mr. Le Poer Bubb to think what he would say to the butler for not putting down the drugget in anticipation of such a visit.

The speech-maker of the deputation at the last found his tongue, and, on behalf of the people of England, asked Mr. Le Poer Bubb to accept what had been subscribed amongst them, in the form of fifty thousand pounds.

Mr. Le Poer Bubb, who had had no thought of

what was coming, and who fancied the people for this that they had done might well be fools, however, decided to take what the people offered. He thought he had made by and out of them all that a reasonable speculator in credulity could very well expect; but Mr. Le Poer Bubb resolved to take this little trifle in addition. Mr. Le Poer Bubb, in his address, of course reiterated much of what he had done for "the people;" but all that he had so done did not somehow get a place. Whenever there had arisen a question between the employer and the employed, Mr. Le Poer Bubb had, after getting away the people by an aside, gone in for the governing interest.

"Curse the people, why can't they work!" he said, some ten minutes after he had addressed a meeting very much against the inequalities of labour, when some one had brought up the ten hours' bill, which Mr. Le Poer Bubb did not like. But then Mr. Le Poer Bubb did appear again before "the masses," and said very much like to what he had said before, as, indeed, he lived by saying, "I am for the people;" and it was felt, as these words fell, that there was every security in what Mr. Le Poer Bubb would do from what Mr. Le Poer Bubb had done.

He had heard that more even than he had got might come out of his getting into Parliament; he knew all the intricacies of the profit side of agitation. He found "Liberalism" ready to his wants; as the parliamentary agent had so well said to Lord Diskount, "It was not material that he did happen to hate the people." It was clear he had as much a right to the use of the two P's

as Lord Diskount. Therefore was Mr. Le Poer Bubb "for progress and the people," and it would be difficult to say of any man that he would not get a hearing if he was for those two things.

Mr. Le Poer Bubb was what is known as an "advanced Liberal." He would give the people whatsoever it might occur to them to ask for; that is, whilst he had a purpose to serve, he would in a forcible manner pledge himself to this. If Mr. Le Poer Bubb pledged so freely, it was not in the nature of moderation to get him to be as free in the realization of his professions. Indeed, from this sort of redemption, Mr. Le Poer Bubb was much given to abstain himself.

When I arrived at Glastonbury, I found that gentleman had in his interest nine out of the dozen leading taverns; it may be that this was the right place for the people's man. Lord Diskount's committee-room was at the chief hotel, where he had in his time cast in his lot at pool, and there, from a convenient balcony, he addressed the people twice a day. The parliamentary agent, indeed, was never very far away when Lord Diskount so addressed the people. It is not untrue that for some few days the son of the Whig earl did make what a hard interpretation would have construed into lapses, and had once inadvertently paraded his key, and spoken of "his attachment to the two P.'s;" but, of course, the parliamentary agent, who was there for such a protecting purpose, got him out of that.

Lord Diskount wanted to know, after a while, as the contest assumed some proportion, "whether,

if he paid, it would not do as well as being obliged to make a fool of himself before a parcel of dirty people twice every day." Now, Lord Diskount paid as well as spoke; indeed, the parliamentary agent took abundant care that he should do both sufficiently; but, then, the parliamentary agent told him it was necessary to make the people believe that he was entirely concerned for them.

"You see, my lord, that is where we Liberals get the pull of the Conservative candidate; the people will not believe he is for them, because he will not say so."

"Then why doesn't he?" asked the young lord, who, by reason of his now having learnt his lesson of the two P.'s, in the main thought that it was very easy.

The parliamentary agent shrugged his shoulders, and merely smiled. "That, my lord, it is impossible to say; but it's a great thing for a man to call himself a 'Liberal:' it goes a long way in these times."

Mr. Le Poer Bubb addressed himself to the people nine times every day from the nine windows of his nine inns. The ground he took was that "he should be returned on the shoulders of the working classes," and should not in any way pay for his election. He should not traffic with the people. The people had been ever very dear indeed to him. He had got them "the big loaf." Mr. Le Poer Bubb did not rely so exclusively upon what the people would do for him, as, perhaps, he might have; indeed, whatever he had ever got, he had been minded to buy; but, then, the electors followed him, for, on his being asked at one time

how far he would go in "the emancipation of the working classes," he said, starting to where a man with a flannel-jacket stood, and seizing the hand of that journeyman carpenter, "Till this, my friend, and all of you, my friends, tell me, in one voice, I have gone as far as you all may want."

This little episode at once went to make Mr. Le Poer Bubb the popular candidate, for the influence of his friend in flannel was very great indeed; and as the meeting was by this broken up, Mr. Le Poer Bubb had every opportunity, as he said, of "getting himself clean of the touch of those poor fools."

This, of course, might have meant commiseration, on account of their education having come in a manner short of his; or it might have meant that Mr. Le Poer Bubb had no ulterior intention of liberating them.

On my arrival at Glastonbury, I went out in the streets, got such a committee as I could, and, knowing nothing of the trade of an election, made very little way.

"Why won't you vote for me?" I asked of one man who had known me once.

"Because you are not a Liberal," he said.

"I cannot be, and care for you," was my reply.

The man stared, and answered, "You do not talk about progress and reform; you don't promise us all *they* do."

I would have asked him what he believed would, out of such professions, ever come to him, but a great crowd streamed by, the afternoon crowd going to hear Lord Diskount and the two P.'s.

By the end of the first day, though I had addressed two meetings, and could not get a hearing at a third, it did not seem to me that I had got ten votes. By chance I came to hear that some starving girl was going from one to another asking many to vote for me; and the thought was upon me, that it might be Miriam May. All that I could ever hear was that the girl did not seem ill-looking, and in my cause could plead sufficiently hard. Some, who well remembered Miriam May, said "she had not been seen these six months, or more," but what support I got seemed to come through the unknown girl. I wrote to Mr. Banco, who, in looking into the state of affairs, saw that I must lose. Indeed I was neither the popular nor the well-to-do candidate; the people were not suffered to be with me; they looked coldly on. When I would speak, they taunted me as though I was there with some mocking mission of oppression. Through all this, mine was the faith of a mere boy. I believed that he who was the most sincere, must be the most successful. I saw the haters of the people passing by me in the struggle buoyed up by the very people whom they meant to sell.

Lord Diskount still rallied round the two P.'s. Mr. Le Poer Bubb still appealed to the "big loaf," and still to the people who were so soon to be thrown aside, making much of the words which always took in the two P.'s, but did not by any means stop there.

Mr. Banco almost said I was a fool to persevere; but the nomination-day had come, and still were there three candidates before the con-

stituency of Great Glastonbury. As I was on my way to the hustings, I was for the moment attracted from my thoughts, to what was going on outside. I looked through the carriage-window, and saw that a crowd had gathered round a girl, who was singing, what to them, and what to me, had the seeming of a sweet song. I had nearly passed, when she turned her head, and the face was none other than the face of Miriam May. I called on her by name—I forgot that I was the opponent of Lord Diskount and Mr. Le Poer Bubb—but she was out of hearing and out of sight. There was no going back, for the crowd which pressed on was too great for that, and I was left to ponder on the strange thing that I had seen. Mr. Le Poer Bubb was the popular candidate. He had always promised anything. To-day he promised everything. At one time it seemed as though he would have cast himself into the air, and thrown himself to be struggled for amongst “the people,” and this was to give expressson to his words, when he said “He could not live away from the people.” “Lords might be very well, but he would sooner entertain the people than princes.”

Lord Diskount thought this to be exceptionable taste, and had he been more able to take advantage of the indiscretion of the people’s candidate, might have made much of the circumstance, when Mr. Le Poer Bubb, on having said all he had to say, returned to his committee, and gave out, “By heavens, how they steam; I would not have the dirty lot in my house for something.”

Lord Diskount made nothing of this little escape; he took his stand on the two P.'s, and with such effect, that the people would not hear me. Once, whilst I was speaking, I thought I saw in the crowd, a great way off, the singing girl, and heard her strange sweet voice, but very clearly I saw nothing then. It was only some time later that all which had passed there that day had become plain, when I remembered that Mr. Le Poer Bubb, the people's candidate, had had the show of hands, and that Lord Diskount, as the son of the patron earl, had got the event on the poll.

So Lord Diskount became member for Great Glastonbury. So was Great Glastonbury lost and won; as Lord Diskount said, when he ceased for a little season to be the "people's man," and got the more himself, "by G—d, the two P.'s did it!"

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCERNING THE CURE OF SOULS AND THE CARES OF
THE FLESH.

LORD DISCOUNT in all this had quite kept up appearances. It was decent that there should be no mention by the returning officer of the parliamentary agent who put out the two P.'s, and Glastonbury was as decently handed over to the nominee of a Whig earl.

It was held that "civil and religious liberty," and "progress," and what-not, had taken a great deal to their advantage by that which had come to me. Mr. Le Poer Bubb, who cursed the people very heartily indeed, entertained a very serious opinion that moneys, other than of a legitimate purpose, had operated to his prejudice. Mr. Le Poer Bubb had well done what he could to set this aside by some strong counter preparation of his own. Indeed, Mr. Le Poer Bubb was inclined to some exasperation, the more because he had spent so much, and had got so very little. But then his course was very plain. Mr. Le Poer Bubb went on to describe the outlay that there had been, which, from the part in the outlay he had played, he was sufficiently well able to do. He cursed the people before his committee with much of that heartiness which had deserted him since he had given over spinning cotton, and then getting carried into public, trusted himself to hint

at what might have been his depression had he not survived, on the certain knowledge that he was still to the people what they were to him. He was always glad to see the people, and there was nothing in his manner to show that, what he was so very glad to see, he had so very lately cursed.

Mr. Le Poer Bubb was to be virtually the people's representative until a petition should establish his position. The parliamentary agent knew that Mr. Le Poer Bubb could carry out such a threat, but of course, even in public places, many bad words were given and returned, whilst the trade of the people's friends got in the end to savour ill.

I had done that which I felt I might never do again ; I had lost more than I could at all afford to lose with the experience that I had gained. I had not the fancy means to measure purses with Lord Diskount ; indeed, it seemed to me that Parliament could be only come at by a method such as I very little cared to reach. I had been beaten back, and beaten to a standstill by one who was almost speechless, by one who did not mean what he said, did even what he so said have any any meaning. I had none of the interest that was necessary, or any of the unscrupulousness which was demanded.

Mr. Le Poer Bubb even, in the struggle, had got a great way past me. I had not the capital which would permit me to be honest, and yet enable me to be successful ; had the means been mine, I might have tried again, but as Parliament seemed so definitely beyond my reach, I took up

again with what was to me the liking of other years, and turned my thoughts towards the Church.

I had taken a good degree, and once ordained, the old love came back strong upon me. The Rev. John Harcourt, perpetual curate of Little Glastonbury, would have given me a title, but it was more to my purpose to get this from the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie. The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie, I well knew, was the rather moved against than for me; but whilst nothing short of a curacy in Great Glastonbury was what I cared to have, I as well knew that there was a fashion in which even the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie could be successfully approached by those from whom he continuously refrained himself. I was prepared to do a great deal for a very little. Mr. Slie, I knew, thought well of this, as an evidence of a Christian mind. When men went mad at once, or postponed such an extreme course in favour of some less definite extravagance in their excess of gratuitous zeal in any matter of convenience for Mr. Slie, Mr. Slie invariably took the symptoms favourably. If it might be that I was not unprepared to take on myself the labours of Mr. Slie for a consideration, that would not have got the Hon. and Rev. gentleman's butler to draw his corks, the knowledge of this brought me up to Mr. Slie's door-bell with all the better confidence.

The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie saw a great deal of company for a man who was held to be so near the kingdom of heaven. To me just then that had its advantages, for though I did not pull the wires hard, I was not kept pulling long.

"The Hon. and Rev. Mr. Slie would not keep me waiting a minute." This information was invariably volunteered: it depended much on who the visitor might be, what the butler's guarantee should go for. Literature, however, was spread out before me in certain of Bishop Hooper's sermons, and in a file of the *Record*.

The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie was what is popularly recognized as a "Low Churchman." Mr. Slie had subscribed to the Thirty-nine Articles because it was necessary to ordination that he should subscribe to neither more nor less; but from divers of these did Mr. Slie dissent. Mr. Slie served many uses when the "Papal aggression" brought all professing Protestants very prominently out to stay the "machinations of Rome." Mr. Slie was a professing Protestant. Indeed, if by reason of professing much a man may be a Protestant, nothing that ever came *vid* Geneva was one whit before Mr. Slie. He began everything just then with a lifting up of his mellow voice against Rome, and the ladies of Glastonbury, at such a time, felt the comfort of their minister. He gave a course of six lectures upon "Anti-christ," family tickets of five shillings, admitting to the front rows, for the whole series, and at a somewhat later crisis, for the like money, he gave up six nights to the "Immaculate Conception" on the floor of the great room where the blanket club gave out their blankets. Miss Todhunter thought them beautiful, as she sat with her veil down, "so far as she understood them;" and indeed, in the end, they were printed at her cost.

It is hard to say what an "Evangelical" may

be; the better may it be told what he is not. He has *not* any business with the name. It is to him the means of feeding upon, with a great greed, the bread of the Church, whilst he does but do the work of the conventicle, the while repudiating every form, ceremony, and doctrine of the Establishment. We are told that by such of the faithful, as was Mr. Slie, does Protestantism, hold its own. If what they represent be "Protestantism," it has nothing exactly in common with that for which afore time men rejoiced when they were burned.

We should take nothing by burning by the street such as Mr. Slie. It would be a thing bad to see and worse to hear; but when, in the end, he became melted down, we should be none the farther off from Rome and none the nearer to Geneva. It was considered that Mr. Slie had done that which no man who ever was stoned, or burned, or hanged, did in a more likely way. He was held to have "put down Romanism;" and this was how he did it. When Oxford put out the tracts, Mr. Slie got hold of one, and discussed it unfavourably in an "Evangelical" publication which, in time, came to take the form of a tract, and was embodied in a very affectionate pastoral to Great Glastonbury. I believe the Oxford tracts may have done some thing for Rome; although out of certain evil certain good has come. But the pains with which Mr. Slie was moved to assail them, I do not the more believe did anything for Protestantism. I believe in Protestantism, and did I believe that Mr. Slie, or such as he, could either keep it up or pull it down, my belief would,

from the moment of such conviction, cease. But at that season, what he had written was held to be "very fine, very safe, very great, very providential."

Mr. Slie was the man that the Establishment wanted; and this was how Mr. Slie got up the necessity, and then drove away the want. It was necessary that he should open his Church doors twice every Sunday, which he did. He set himself against organs, red rubrics, weekly communions, daily services, or any excessive familiarity in every-day life with those, who, on the Sunday, were recognized from a very proper distance as the heirs of free seats and no hassocks. It was even said by his churchwarden that Mr. Slie forbade all candlesticks within his house. So far from appearing in a surplice in the pulpit, Mr. Slie's acting costume was a black silk gown, very full at the sleeves, which gave his arms great play, and a pair of lavender kid gloves, a sort of taste Wickliffe and others might have looked well in, had those reformers fancied such an adornment of their person at all necessary to protesting men. Then Mr. Slie, who demurred to the "Tractarian's interpretation of the ritual," very much added to the general confidence felt in his powers by doing what he would with the text of the service at pleasure.

He had, indeed, subscribed to "Baptismal regeneration;" but the protesting element which, after a while, got such a hold of him, induced that gentleman to modify his subscription without abandoning his cure. Then when he buried those who in the flesh had been sinners overmuch, he would not leave them in any "sure and certain

hope of a joyful resurrection." It was in such little ways that Mr. Slie undertook to make the Book of Common Prayer "a really Protestant publication."

Mr. Slie, whilst he did not believe in Apostolic succession, did not set himself against a belief in anything necessary to the being a bishop. Even that absolution which he pronounced twice each Sabbath, he denied his right to pronounce every Sabbath and every other day. Then it was but likely that Mr. Slie, in the matter of forms, should do an equal service to the Protestant cause. He was not going to bow down his head. He could undertake to show that it was not the right thing to do even at THAT Name "at which every knee shall bow;" but then Mr. Slie was not a common person, subject at all to the doing of common things. Mr. Slie was not going to become the agent of Antichrist and throw his head up and down because others so threw up and down their heads. The beauty of Protestantism, as he showed, was that a man with a stiff neck could be as good a Protestant as any one. Then there was, as he had it, "the difficulty of the Virgin Mary." Mr. Slie was not disposed to think ill of her; he believed her to be neither higher nor lower than Miss Todhunter, or any other woman of excellent report. Beyond this was Mr. Slie an "Evangelical" without any abatement. He professed opinions in which he did not believe; he could not very well profess what he did believe in and hold his cure.

The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie was, perhaps, ten minutes before he redeemed the promise of

his serving man that I should not be called upon to wait. He was beautifully embellished, and if it were intended to make him a monument of Protestantism, and if he could be induced to sit in that dress, Protestantism would have no cause to think indifferently of the model. He had just returned from a flower-show, and was going some hours later to lecture at the "faith without works"—the "faith without works" had then a room to itself, a table, and as many chairs as were ever wanted—on "the vanities of the world."

"Ah, my dear young friend, come to be one of us? I do, indeed, commend your resolution; it's a noble thing this finding people on one's track to God; all souls follow us, Mr. Trevor. I hope I may be taken first before any great number of my flock are called away. I am really delighted to see that you have joined us."

I did not know that I had. It had at no time formed any part of my purpose or intention so to do; and other than this I could not quite see how Mr. Slie could be glad to have people about him when he was never in their midst; nor did I care to inquire how he could be so affectionate towards me, when in the assize court, and at the election, and at other times it had served him to keep me a way off; and I said, "I have come here to-day, Mr. Slie, to ask if I may work with you"—I did not speak of work in any manner of sarcasm—"if I can but get a few to look up, and to look on, I shall, of all things, have cause to thank God that He has made me such a medium."

"My dear young friend, I perceive that you

would joy in the hope of a Christian. In a parish like this it is not a few that a minister of God may save. It has happened here that the hungry and the halt should come alike to me; no one dies but I am at the death. The man who falls from the house-top sends for me. Women, anxious to be churched—even those who cannot send to fetch me by a husband—must, poor creatures, have me with them. When you talk of a few coming about you, it must not be in any parish such as this. My excellent young friend, the labours of the Christian minister have yet to be written. I had such a high respect for your good father, that it will please me much if you will work with me. A curate I must have, for I am called away by business—spiritual business, I must beg you to understand, my dear sir—which may not be postponed. In that case I should have to leave you in sole charge, and in consideration of this I would stretch a point, and make it an income—say £80 a year. There are but the two Sabbath day services and the Wednesday evening lecture, which, if you have friends, they will at times do for you. As to visiting, my dear sir, it may well be done too much. I have avoided any excess, I believe, in this matter. The ‘faith without works,’ and the ‘Charity Club,’ are very pleasurable conceits of the ladies, and the Lying-in Hospital and the Penitentiary have always brought me very agreeably into contact with the female members of my congregation. They manage these little matters with charming delicacy. One gets to understand what they mean without any necessity for painful explana-

tions; though Miss Todhunter, who is timid, must not be told too much. I leave these things pretty generally to Mrs. Dubbelfaise; indeed, I may well say that in Church matters that lady's excellent advice has been my rubric."

I did not think £80 a year for all this was too much. It may have been that I thought it too little; but I had only just time to tell Mr. Slie that his offer was accepted, when a tap at the door interrupted our conversation.

"If you please, sir," said the servant, introducing his head, "it's that young girl, as has been so often, come again. She says her mother is dying, and would like to see your reverence."

"There, my dear sir," observed Mr. Slie, addressing me, "is an admirable warning to the young clergyman. This woman—about whom nothing much is known, except that my friend Mrs. Dubbelfaise says she bears a very questionable character—is in the habit of sending for me sometimes thrice in one day, under the pretence of my administering to her the last offices of the Church. This comes of your weekly communions; it vulgarizes and makes familiar all that should be sacred and occasional; it is a device of this poor creature, struggling as she is, like a little fly on the brink of a great lake, to get nourishment out of me. Tell her, continued Mr. Slie, addressing the servant, "that I may be that way to-morrow and shall endeavour to call."

I thought Mr. Slie might well have gone before to one whom he had pointed out as being so near to the brink of a great lake; and as soon as I

had left him, and had learnt from the servant where the girl and her mother lived, I turned my steps in that direction.

It was a good hour's walk to any one who knew the way, but to me it took some time longer. The cottage where they lived stood nearly alone; but it seemed to me, from its evident insignificance, that only "universal suffrage" could have brought the tenant within the franchise.

I tapped gently at the door; no answer came, and I raised the latch and stood within the room.

A girl was sitting, or, rather, crouching on the floor, her face buried in her hands. In the corner was what might have been a bed, but not a bedstead, where it seemed as though something very still, but human, lay. I spoke to the girl and she looked up, looked up and through me with her great hollow eyes, and she started up, staying a scream that had almost reached her lips, cowering down as though she feared my coming. In all and above all that starvation had done and was doing, I saw before me the outline, for it was nothing more, of her who had said before all in the great court at Chudleigh, "I will save you;" who had burned that will "with the one codicil annexed thereto;" who had sung in the crowd as I went to the hustings at Great Glastonbury—it was even Miriam May; and so again was it that we came together.

There was still the golden hair, still the violet eyes. I saw all this, and more, in an instant of time, and had I not caught her in my arms, she would have fallen, for very well she could not stand.

“Miriam!” I said, “in God’s name, speak—what does all this mean?”

At the sound of my words she did try to speak, and with a shudder I felt her arm of fleshless bone laid on me. A cough, that seemed to shake her, brought blood upon her lips.

“Miriam, Miriam!” I said, “what have I ever done, that, like this, I have been forgotten?”

She would have answered—a struggle there was to tell all, but she only spitted blood.

She took, or rather dragged me to the bed; she lifted the sheet, and in seeming death lay there the mother of Miriam May. I saw all; I might yet save both.

“Miriam,” I said, “I am only going to fetch food;” and then Miriam May for the first time spoke. It was not at all as you or I would speak; it was a cry—a great exceeding cry.

“Mother,” she said, when the cough would let her, for she felt her mother even might wake up to hear her now—“mother, there is food coming—don’t you hear that?—we are saved.”

“Saved! oh, who talks of food—who has come to save *us*? and, as I turned to leave, I looked back, and saw the mother struggling—knowing nothing that she did—to sit up and say something that seemed like a prayer, the while in her child’s arms.

I had returned in a few minutes with such things as the neighbours could give me; Mrs. Bertram, who lived close by, herself coming to see what she might do. In a few hours, the mother of Miriam May, although she could not tell who any of us were, was so far better as to

sink back into a deep unbroken sleep, and, as the evening drew on, Miriam and I were again alone. Mrs. Bertram had undertaken to see Mr. Mountaigne and urge him to come on at once. I took the occasion to inquire how it was that Miriam May and her mother had come to this great strait, and yet had never found me out. She explained that three years and more ago, she had written to me at Oxford, but that I not having answered, she had not liked to write again. The letter had never reached me, and when Miriam's troubles grew, she had not the heart again to seek me. Mr. Mountaigne had been away abroad, and Mr. Slie, when appealed to, had referred Miriam on to Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who said, "Really, of course, there's no doubt about it, but it serves such people right;" beyond this, Miriam and her mother could not go. They were struck down; they changed their name; they hid themselves; and so they struggled on, asking and taking nothing.

I would not then let Miriam try to tell me all; but when her mother in her sleep threw up her thin arms, and cried out, "You need not marry him, Miriam, now; he is not good enough for *you*," I ventured to ask what this might mean; and Miriam explained that the man who carried out the bonnets at a milliner's establishment in Great Glastonbury had some three times offered himself, and his heart, and his basket to her, and I heard it was only this day that Miriam had made up her mind, if he should ask again, "for better or for worse," to take him. Then I did not press her to tell his name, but I assured her

that she need form no such alliance if only brought to it by want.

As it came on to be dark, Miriam said she thought she could sleep if I would pray with her, and we kneeled up there side by side, as we had together in those days that had gone by; and then Miriam May lay down in her great weariness and thankfulness to sleep.

The night was far spent, and I was watching still with the full moon lighting up the room, when Mr. Mountaigne, heavily provisioned, entered. We stayed awhile talking in whispers of those who slept before us, when the mother of Miriam May sat up in her dreams, and cried out, as she clasped her hands, "Miriam, see, it is the baker—there is bread—bread for us," and then she laughed; "it is the butcher—no, no—they have wings like angels—they will turn from me—they will ask for my ring—see, Miriam, see—they do not turn away—they must be angels, or they would—and listen, they are saying, 'I shall not die, but live!'" And in her sleep she so cried out, that Miriam awoke at the last words, and buried her head in her mother's breast, and said, "In my dream many voices said that, too,— 'Mother, we shall not die, but live.'"

And they did not die, but lived.

CHAPTER XIV.

LONG CREDIT AND LONG HOURS.

THE mother of Miriam^{*} May had after this manner come to dream a good deal of late. Any rest by day she had a great while ceased to look for; but when the nights took their weariness from the agony of the hours of light, the apothecary, who was not so well to look upon, said the mother of Miriam May had better make up her mind to die some time very soon. He charged reasonably enough for his drugs, and in those cases which were in a measure hopeless he had been known to give them away, so that whatever he compounded might do, was done.

When Miriam and her mother put up the brass plate on their door in Great Glastonbury, and took those two very decent rooms, a good deal that was fair held up its phantom form before them. They had ever so many neatly-printed cards, and for all the while that they so made dresses, they were minded not to work on the Sabbath-day.

When the first dress was ordered of them, they had a little pudding with plums, and spoke cheerfully of doing a great business yet. It might have been better, were there nothing to pay for out of pocket; but there *was* a good deal, and over the first dress, the trade of Glastonbury could not stand much credit. Miriam, when she

took it home, made out the little bill, and very early hoped to see the money. Within the month Lady Foxmore called. Lady Foxmore called there, as she was perhaps too well known by others who had in their turn put up brass plates, and she ordered in such a great way, and in so many great words, that Miriam could hardly help crying, when she thought of what a good friend had come; and the big tears fell about, even about on Lady Foxmore.

When the countess was gone, Miriam May went up stairs, and cried out a glad Psalm, and asked God to show her words, that out of her heart to Him, she might speak all; and then Miriam wrote to me the letter which I never got.

It had not at all entered into their calculations that people who came in carriages would not pay. *They* had paid the man who put up the brass plate, perhaps overmuch; and at the end of the six months there was a strong faith in both, that such long credit brought its disadvantages. Of course, they were very glad to trust Lady Foxmore; and of course, some of these days Lady Foxmore would pay; but it entered very materially into their arithmetic to know when it might be quite convenient.

All this time, and it may be told a great time before, had Lady Foxmore kept up her reputation for having new things, and none the less conspicuously for not exactly paying. Once, indeed, when want was getting into a reality, and was like to settle in these little rooms, Miriam May did call, and did ask for a very little money,

in a very little voice. To all of which, as were neither the voice nor the demand excessive, Lady Foxmore, who never decided, but in one way, in these matters hastily, was so very good as to say, "My good girl, we will talk of that another time."

Miriam had quite meant to have a bit of meat for her mother on that day, but like the reference of the countess, this seemed contingent on "another time." Miriam May and her mother did not do a very great business, and when the pudding was made now, was only when any order might be paid for, not, as on other days, when merely given. But then Lady Foxmore was always in a manner very genial, and Miriam May, when she went to Diskount Hall, had been, out of some great attention, promoted to wait in the housekeeper's room. After a while, and not a very long while, even the housekeeper managed to get a dress made up by Miriam May on credit.

It was eighteen months, and more, since the brass plate had first told Great Glastonbury what Miriam May and her mother had a mind to do; and Lady Foxmore had not yet gone beyond a promise to pay. The countess held this to be a great deal, but on being once again pressed for a little money, she said if Miriam would call in a week, she would see what could be done. Miriam, when she heard that, thought she was going to get all that ever the countess owed, and with this she was going to buy some more blankets for the coming winter, and an easy chair for her mother, who was at no time strong, and

was just then ailing; and they would set aside one day, one day not so far away, when they should do nothing but go out amongst the hills, and to the lake side, to breathe the air. Going up to Diskount Hall, Miriam saw a little lad crying mackerel—mackerel of the third day, which the apprentice to “business habits” introduced as fresh.

Miriam thought she would have a fish of the little lad as she went back, and told the house-keeper of the feast which she meant to set before her mother. Presently, after a season of much proper waiting, did Lady Foxmore send for Miriam to go upstairs; and Miriam, who had before that written out a receipt in full, felt for the purse in her pocket, the better to assure herself that she had every capacity about her to receive.

Lady Foxmore was not so nearly dressed as that she may be described, when Miriam was suffered to pass in.

“I am going to make your fortune, my good girl,” said the countess, who was in the hands of her maid, “and I am very glad to serve you, for you are a very good child, and really deserve well.”

Miriam May had not gone there in any way to carry back a fortune; a very little would have got the holiday, and the blankets, and the easy chair, and the third-day mackerel; and in her joy, when she heard of what was coming as a fortune, she had more than once well nigh upset the handmaid.

Miriam had now got the purse into her hand,

and very humbly thought she might take no harm by very humbly saying, "Please, my lady, I have brought the receipt."

"My good girl," said her ladyship, looking very shy indeed at the paper, "we'll talk of that another time, I have a great deal to tell you."

Miriam felt the chilly perspiration on the hand that clung to the empty purse. All that she had come there hoping for, and which she had builded up through the nights and days of that long waiting week, had been by those words dried up utterly. She could not go back and face her mother, and take down the knives and forks, when there was nothing they might have for the service of any fork or for any knife to cut through. She could not go back and see the face of longing, anxious hope, smiling to meet her at the door. She had come to carry back what she had earned in those many hard months of credit and care; and she must go on her way now without the means of listening even to the mackerel boy.

Miriam, at the thought of this and more, caught hold of the *chaise* lounge on which the countess sat; the tears fought, as tears will fight to come, and she saw only dimly, and the great grand bedroom seemed to swim.

"Give her some sal volatile," said the wife of the earl; "poor girl, she has walked far;" but by this Miriam had got the tears to come, those tears which, with the purse in the one hand and the receipt in the other, had welled up when her heart had stayed back one word of remonstrance with her Maker.

Miriam wanted food, wanted it in a manner much, but she gathered up the receipt and the purse, and though her heart and mind were near to breaking, she put them by for another day, that other day to which the whole world till the "crack of doom" is hurrying on.

"You mustn't be foolish, and cry, when you have got such good friends; there, dry your eyes," said the countess of Foxmore, who had kissed the queen's hand, and had done many other such things, which are the right of her superior clay to do; "if you are to have my custom, you must have it on my terms. I do not like people to move out of their place," said the mother of one of the "men of the people," who believed that God meant some people to stand empty, and wait on other people all for nothing.

"If you please, my lady," said Miriam, "we do thank you very much indeed, for all you have done for us, but—but—" truth to tell, here-upon Miriam's thoughts fell on the easy chair, and the whole holiday amongst the hills, and the blankets for the nearing winter, and the third day mackerel, and she found the strength to say, "If your ladyship will not pay us, we must starve."

"Don't talk like that, girl, you who have had hundreds of pounds of my money—or of my orders; people in your station are so very ungrateful. I was going to tell you how much I could do for Mrs. May; but if you do not know when you are well off, I shall pay you, and have done with you for ever."

Miriam was very near acting on this little speech, and taking her ladyship at her word, all

of which might have been awkward ; but she got her tears away out of sight, and the countess put nothing so very inconvenient into present execution.

“ I was going to tell you,” continued Lady Foxmore, who thought it best to go on, lest Miriam should change her mind, “ that my son, Lord Diskount, is going to be married, and that a word from me might get you much of the *trousseau*. There, my good girl, say nothing about gratitude ; I *have* been a little hurt, but I am sure you will check any such hastiness for the future. It may be a heavy order, and when completed, you have only to ask, and you shall have your money.”

All that Miriam May had ever yet done was “ only to ask,” and her faith, even in those two years, had been only in a measure knocked out of her. When beyond all cast down, she cried out to nothing human ; and again to her there was a promise of hope in the future. But when all was told that night, the mother of Miriam May saw none.

“ Heaven help us, darling,” she said, as she staggered back, not in any way into the easy chair.

A great weary while did Miriam May lie awake that night, to tell how the order for the Diskount *trousseau* was to come. Certain things had Miriam and her mother to pawn, to get such other things as must of need be got, and some hundreds of pounds did Lady Foxmore—who every year had many thousands—owe

When two years and six months were fully

gone, the dressmaker and her daughter ceased to give credit. Lady Foxmore was very kind and very civil, and did everything but pay. There was to be an end to all this now, and the next state even then showed its signs of being for the worse.

Miriam May and her mother one day went out and took the cottage where I found them. "Air," said the ill-favoured apothecary, "could only keep what there was to keep of Mrs. May out of the pit, and there was no saying how long even all the air that was to be got might have the strength to do so."

Miriam went to Mr. Mountaigne, but he was abroad; then to Mr. Slie, who, as has been shown, passed her over to the "charity committee," whereat charity was represented in all its capacity by Mrs. Dubbelfaise. That lady said "really, of course, there's no doubt about it," and many other things, which were harsh things when so administered by a council of charity.

Mrs. May had some time sunk beneath the power to work, and somehow Miriam must keep both. Mrs. Dubbelfaise, indeed, hinted that they might go back from whence they came—this being taken as literally, as that lady meant it should be, signifying the workhouse. Herein was an idea, but there was time always to act upon it.

Miriam May went after a little while to work for a milliner at Great Glastonbury. What she so earned, so far from keeping the pot boiling, suffered them to keep no pot at all. In the making of mantles, she could realize from fourpence to sixpence on each, and would in this

accumulating manner, from the easy hours of eight to eight, earn six whole shillings a week. This in easy times rather more than paid their rent, and a butcher, who had once known Stephen Mervyn, allowed them a pound of gravy meat on the Sunday; but even this, and the twelve hours in the six days, did not keep from Miriam very long a cough, which seemed to be the only thing about them that would grow.

When this had some time come, Miriam would not be without a colour; and in the long bad winter it grew brighter, and she seemed more beautiful. The mother, when she saw it settle there and go, would call on her God for hours together, to take away that bright spot from her darling's cheek, when the spring should come. The ill-visaged apothecary, who had been consulted in those hours, when he could be got to speak for nothing, shook his head, and said "that the Mays must keep good fires;" and on that day, when Miriam had gone away to Great Glastonbury to stitch for those twelve hours, Mrs. May crawled out into the frost, and asked a boy who was by that way with a truck to carry her to the friendly butcher's, and before the friendly man of meat she prayed for a little coal.

That day was not to be one of those which in their lives was marked by the greatest care. Miriam's mother was brought back in the butcher's cart, which was a whole step higher than the truck, with a good free gift of coal.

The spring came, and a warm spring too, and the hectic spot still stood on the cheek of Miriam May. There was to be a great ball at Diskount

Hall, and the house where Miriam May was a "hand" had a great deal to do with what was coming. One day a lady came very early in the morning, and asked if she could have a dress made up by the afternoon; the manager said yes, as any manager would have said, in so great a house, and four good "hands" were set on to help the establishment to keep faith.

At 2 p.m., two of the hands which were weakly, and not worth their hire, cast down their work, and gave way; they broke down, and, as two spectres, turned into the streets with their pale faces to startle passers-by, and go to such homes as they might have, having earned but ninepence all that day. Others could not be spared for that one dress, so Miriam had but another "hand" to work with her. At twenty minutes past two, that other "hand" fell over in a swoon, and was carried away to a back place very decently to prevent interruption. Miriam's cough had never been at all as it was that day. Some time was she like to swoon too, but still the fearful cough shook her, and she held on yet.

"Twenty minutes more," said the manager, who came to see the struggle, and urge on the sinking "hand."

"I shall fall back," said Miriam, "unless you will hold my head;" and the manager, entirely as a matter of business, did hold the head of Miriam May.

"Ten minutes more," said the directress, and Miriam by this could hardly see.

"Finish that," said the manager, who thought

it well to stimulate, "and you shall have your shilling, and go home."

With this bit of a holiday held up, Miriam May caught at the rest she was to have, and went on. It was only a matter of stitches now to finish that great job; but the cough had not spoken out those many hours for nothing. The manager could not hold up Miriam then, nor could ten managers have kept her sitting there. She fell over, and the blood which broke through her lips lay there in its ever stain upon the dress.

"You shall pay for this, you ungrateful, nasty girl," said the manager, who might well have remembered that Miriam was a "hand" who could not pay; and she pushed Miriam away, who was glad to get down for a little rest in a heap, and forget everything—a luxury in the heritage of a "hand"—for a little while, where, but for the drops of blood, she might have lain forgotten too.

Ninepence, in the end, was all she got, other than her discharge, and as she went through the trade door, the man who carried out the bonnets asked if he might see her home.

Then came the election for Great Glastonbury, and Miriam May, who for weeks had lived on what the butcher gave away, and on what the man who carried out the bonnets spared, went out into the streets to sing. It was a bad thing to do with that flush upon her face; the cough often stopped her, but when the butcher died, Miriam went out to sing again. Often did she hold back from those busy streets where a butcher or a baker were, for fear that she might steal; and one

time she laid away their store of bread in fourteen pieces.

When that was gone, they must come to the workhouse, or themselves pass altogether away. But the man who carried out the bonnets saw that his time was come, and offered marriage, and the time had come when such an offer had its advantages. But Miriam May said "No!" and again, and again she said it; and though Mrs. Dubbel-faise, when she heard of what had happened to the dress, said, at an extraordinary meeting of the "charity committee," "It was a judgment that the seed of sin should be spitting blood," she sent to Mr. Slie.

That afternoon was gone the last of the fourteen divisions of the bread, when I had lifted the latch, by a great mercy yet in time. Mr. Slie, had he called, as he might have been minded the next day, could, had he been so inclined, have handed over the two bodies to the parish officers; and I thought the more of this, as the mother on that bed spoke of the butcher and the baker that peopled her dreams, and then of those that had wings; and I knew that some very short time later all that mother would have seen would be those who had those wings, and could be only angels because they did not turn from her who wore no ring.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NEW BISHOP OF ST. AMBROSE.

I HAD not been a week ordained, before it was made very clear that Miriam May and her mother would look to me for food. Mr. Mountaigne was for taking this care off my hands; but as that involved the going back of the dressmaker and her child to Great Glastonbury, when of all things was it well they should get the air, I was the more glad when Mrs. Bertram offered to take them to her own house.

Mrs. Bertram did not know what she might be doing for her name in so moving in such a matter; nor did Mrs. Bertram care to know, nor care had she even known. Mrs. Dubbelfaise said, "Really, of course, there was no doubt about it;" and her two friends of the charity committee lifted up their hands and said, "There *was* no doubt—no, not any."

Mrs. Bertram, the same circle of charity observed, should know a great deal better than take a woman into her house who had borne a child, to say the least of it, in an equivocal manner. Miss Todhunter, who, notwithstanding her single condition, was getting by rapid degrees to an age when she might talk of these things as though she had a husband, saw what was done even as Mrs. Dubbelfaise; and Mrs. Slim, who was of all women easily shocked, was for getting the scandal

publicly reproved, only that she did not well know how herself to begin.

I have seen in some communities—but I am reminded that I have not seen it in many—those who could go on their own way, taking thought of none of the conventionalities that might be, to their neighbours and acquaintance, law. Now, Mrs. Bertram was one of these. She was beautiful; and it is before all things strange, when such a woman is not slandered with all those many forms of pleasant slander which have a fashion in every-day charity.

Miss Todhunter said Mrs. Bertram was “Very well, but the Todhunters carried themselves better.”

Mrs. Slim, who carried herself ill, could get herself over the carriage; but Mrs. Bertram, so she said, had not the refinement of the Slims.

All this, and a great deal more like to it, mattered so little, that it might be said to have mattered nothing at all, for Mrs. Bertram was a perfect woman, a very woman, and what others could not do, Gertrude Bertram, in her gentleness and beauty, could. Miss Todhunter would have given up her own hereditary ease of deportment, and Mrs. Slim would have given away all the refinement of her family, to have been like Mrs. Bertram, whose “presence” and “refinement” were a long remove above the Todhunters and the Slims.

It was to Mrs. Bertram that Miriam and her mother went. It was a beautiful bright day when they set out to the Bertrams’ home. Miriam’s cough, as her mind threw off many of its cares,

had got better, and Mr. Mountaigne said that those who loved her, yet might hope. Glad, never-to-be-forgotten days were those which brought back the memory of other years. Miriam and I walked out again together; and sometimes it seemed as though what had come between had never been, but that Miriam May was even yet a child. The beauty of this lovely girl had never spoken to me as a thing from which I should hold away. What had so drawn us together was that which time made sacred to us in a hundred forms. I did love, love utterly, Miriam May; but it was never to me that love which sees in such a loveliness a wife. I never once had thought of that; but I felt that nothing like her had I ever seen, and there may be danger in feeling this, when it is felt too often and too long.

The first Sunday that Miriam May could get to church, as our eyes met, when I was preaching with my whole heart to those whom Mr. Slie had left in trust to me, I could not get myself back as I should to my sermon. I might have been busied with those soft, soul-lit eyes; I could see she was, from the pew in which she sat, taking in my every word. I could lead her anywhere, and if I spoke well, I felt that there was one there that day on whom those good words were not cast away.

Then Miriam, when she got more strength, had her class at the Sunday-school; and by-and-by she went out by night and day amongst my poor and many a time did Miriam close the eyes of those dead people whom I, whom we, had spoken words of prayer beside.

There were those, there were many such, who had charitable things to say of what was done. Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who could go as far as any when she liked—and it was not only sometimes when she liked—had it that “I was often out all night with the workhouse-girl; that she was not going to shrink back and stand by and see Sisters of Mercy in her parish.” So, in the end, did that lady get the ear of Mr. Slie, who, very comfortable and easy in other parts, was satisfied by sending me an affectionate remonstrance. Mrs. May and her daughter were not suffered to give up the Bertrams’ hospitality, and for many years there had been nothing like the present joy to Miriam and her mother.

I had not been so occupied many months, when returning home from morning prayers at the church—for I had established daily services, to the utter unstringing of Mrs. Dubbelfaise’s Protestant nerves—I was met by Mr. Harcourt, who stopped to ask me if I had heard that the bishop of St. Ambrose, who had been a long time dying, was dead.

There is nothing more in the death of a good bishop than there ever is in the death of any good man, other than the personal calculations which arise at certain occasions over his corpse, as to his successor.

At that time Viscount Fripon was first minister, and this was not the first bishop whom he had been called upon to make.

“It is rumoured,” said Mr. Harcourt, as he passed on, “that Slie will get it; he has great interest; his brother has not supported the

administration for nothing. Lord Foxmore, too, is said to be anxious that Slie should have it; and Kantwell, who is notoriously the bishop-maker of the Cabinet, has written, I hear, to Mr. Slie."

It was quite likely that there might be a bottom of truth in all this. The ministry *had* made such "Protestant" appointments. Viscount Fripon, who could see no very great difference between a bishop and a bulrush, was governed in these spiritual things by Lord Kantwell, a nobleman then held to be the foremost platform religionist of the age. If Lord Kantwell had written to Mr. Slie, then was there no reason that something might not come to Protestantism greatly to its advantage. My leanings may be strong, but a job with a bishop does seem to me an offence against One other than a man. That there are men like to Mr. Slie is only because from such as Mr. Slie men are fashioned into bishops. But what Mr. Harcourt had so heard was not at all without foundation, for Mr. Slie, who might have had occasion to feel the bishop's death in perhaps an excessive way, did receive this very flattering letter from Lord Kantwell.

" House of Lords, Tuesday.

"MY DEAR MR. SLIE,—We can do better than overdo our regret for the late bishop of St. Ambrose. I have known grieving of an undue sort lead to that Popish abomination of saying prayers for the dead; and it is the death of this excellent and harmless man that gives me the more reason

to hope we can still further strengthen the hands of Protestantism in this country.

“These are not days when the prelacy can be traded on. The ascendancy of the existing administration I hold to be quite a providential arrangement. Lord Fripon, who wisely does not busy himself with what he does not understand—my religious papers in this matter for an excellent purpose do him more than justice—is willing to leave the exercise of Church patronage in my hands; indeed, whilst he will race horses, it is as well that he should so separate himself from holy things. I am determined to put down Puseyism; and any one whom I, on behalf of Lord Fripon, can recommend to the queen, must very satisfactorily convince me that, if I may say so, he believes the Thirty-nine Articles might well be less in scope and number. In a word, Lord Fripon has sanctioned me, conditionally, to make you the offer of the see of St. Ambrose. Your excellent brother—I wish he could be brought to think a little less of pool—has given so generous a support to the administration, and Lord Foxmore is so assured of your Protestantism, that, subject to certain considerations, I may say the bishopric of St. Ambrose can be yours. These considerations, my dear sir, are, that I should be satisfied on all the following points.

“Do you believe, and to what extent, in Apostolic succession? Do you believe in Baptismal Regeneration, and in Absolution? and do you sanction in any way Confession? I do not desire to influence you in this matter, of course, but are you favourably disposed towards a moderate mea-

sure of liturgical revision? Would you sanction amongst your clergy the surplice in the pulpit? Are you friendly to daily services and weekly communions? What is the least and the most number of times in the year that you would urge your clergy to preach against the Virgin Mary? I should feel that I had not hurriedly compromised the confidence of Lord Fripon, if, at your pleasure, you would state your views generally on these things. Whatever may be your political sympathies, they can weigh nothing in this great matter; but if you should conceive it possible to give an independent support to her Majesty's present ministers, I do not know but that such an expression of confidence might have its weight with her Majesty, when my—when Lord Fripon's—recommendation is before her.

“ I am, my dear Mr. Slie,

“ Very faithfully yours,

“ KANTWELL.

“ P.S. — Should you be indisposed to look favourably on preaching in Exeter Hall? and I should take it kindly if you would let me know whether your sympathies are with the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, or the Church Missionary Society.”

Mr. Slie who did not at all mind how many of these questions might be asked, sat himself down, and so made answer:—

*“ Calvin House, St. James’s,
“ Wednesday morning.*

“ MY DEAR LORD KANTWELL,—Your lordship’s very kind letter of yesterday should have been answered earlier, but that it laid before me the offer of a gift which no man, I must hold, should hurriedly accept. My lord, in what I may say I shall hope to emulate your lordship’s frankness. I should feel ill at ease were not some such means as you have held out offered me for evidencing that this offer, so generously and heartily made by your lordship, may be accepted by me without prejudice to the religion of the ‘ Defender of the Faith.’

“ My lord, I have very long wondered who of the simple ones of the age could believe in Apostolic succession, and yet the more that there could be found those who lend their faith to the regeneration of infants by water in an instrument of stone. I believe that liturgical revision is indispensable, because Confession and Absolution may not be defended. I have long been satisfied that Daily Services and Weekly Communion come of the inventions of Rome set forth to tempt the wavering. Should your lordship’s recommendation to her Majesty place the diocese of St. Ambrose in my trust, I shall, my lord, not lightly admonish all such of my clergy as are given to say too much for the Virgin Mary, and who would wear the surplice in the pulpit, urging them to substitute a silk gown, very full at the sleeves, which I have found to give not a little effect to the Protestant character of the

preacher. I should not be unmindful of your lordship's impassioned judgment that Puseyism must be at once put down. My lord, in my diocese, this evidence of Antichrist should have no abiding place whatever. You will see that I have said much calculated to put it down at page 45 of the Essay I enclose. Politically I hold that no Protestant bishop should set himself up against a Protestant administration, but the rather strengthen the hands of such an executive; for whilst I entirely appreciate the delicacy of your lordship's expressed opinion that my votes and sympathies should not be prescribed, I am prepared to give an independent support — your lordship will gather what I mean — to the present excellent administration; and in so doing, I conceive I should be giving an earnest of my declared intention to put down Puseyism in its every form. I cannot have any difficulty in assuring your lordship that I hold the exposition of the Gospel in Exeter Hall to be, of all things, a means for hurrying on the Kingdom of God. My lord, I should hold that to preach there was no light honour. I cannot hesitate to state that whilst I might say nothing harsh of its rival, the Church Missionary Society has, of the two societies your lordship mentions, alone any place in my affections. I could arrest the action of the Propagation people in many ways of cautious indifference. Indeed, I should look with suspicion on any society that does so recognize exclusively those missions which have the approval of episcopacy. My lord, I never felt stronger in my life that a prelacy must

just now be encouraged, but I take it we may save souls without bishops, and win souls in little chapels where bishops will not enter. My lord, without reflection and without much prayer I have not thought upon your lordship's offer. My lord, in what I have said I have concealed nothing. Should the great trust of St. Ambrose fall on me, whilst I never can forget what I owe to your lordship, I shall not the less remember what is due to that religion which was once declared by Calvin, and which is yet proclaimed by Exeter Hall.

“I have the honour to remain, my Lord,

“Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

“CALVIN SLIE.

“P.S.—Your lordship invites my opinion as to the wisdom of making any reduction in the number of the Thirty-nine Articles. My lord, as a Protestant, I believe there are those which are a menace to Protestantism; by another post I could tell your lordship exactly by how much I conceive they are too many.”

It is not known whether by the next or any other post the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie reduced his argument against the Articles—to which he thought it faithful to subscribe whilst he held certain of them to be a menace to the faith he professed—to figures, and specified those which he held to be objectionable; but on the second day after that letter was sent to Lord Kantwell, I again met Mr. Harcourt, who, but little given to say hard things, said in a measure very hardly then :—

"Here, Trevor, is another Protestant appointment; Slie is to be the new bishop."

There had been three of the same sort within as many months; and under those circumstances, the seeming sarcasm of Mr. Harcourt must not be too harshly criticised. Had Mr. Harcourt been the new bishop, it would not have been said that there had been at all a Protestant appointment. He too much sought out his poor, and did perhaps too much in many ways for their souls, and even encouraged the assembling together of the people of his cure in the Church of God on every working day. Mr. Harcourt was not an extreme man, either in opinion or expression; but, of all things, he took his stand against the wholesale elevation of the Calvinistic clergy, and when he added, "The Church may have too many of these men, why don't they keep to their chapels?" Mr. Harcourt was so nearly right as not to be very wrong.

Both Mr. Harcourt and I had good cause to know that Mr. Slie was no man to be a bishop; and at any other time we might have smiled at the announcement of his preferment which appeared in a paper that Mr. Harcourt held in his hand, but that we felt in all this the ascendancy of Exeter Hall, and that the despotism of Lord Fripon's bishop-maker was getting to be no joke.

"If Lord Fripon would only make his own bishops," put in Mr. Harcourt, "we might have a jockey, and then we should know the worst." But the *Record* of that date seemed to think, or had been instructed to say, "than that Mr. Slie, no one could be better."

It so went on: "We have much pleasure in stating that, on the recommendation of Lord Fripon, the queen has been pleased to confer the vacant bishopric of St. Ambrose on the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie. We have good reason to know that this selection has been made by the prime minister in recognition of the long and faithful exercise by Mr. Slie of his duties as a minister, and not in any way, as has been elsewhere hinted, in consideration of the distinguished services of the brother of the bishop designate. By this latest evidence of Protestant zeal, Lord Fripon will have consolidated that confidence of all real Protestants, which his former nominations to the episcopacy have done so much to secure. The Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie is a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, and has held the living of Great Glastonbury for nearly thirty years. He is a member of the Evangelical party in the Church; and is favourably known as the author of many recondite controversial treatises in opposition to the more insidious of the "Tracts for the Times." His essays on the "Immaculate Conception," published, we believe, at the sole cost of a parishioner, a single lady; those on "Antichrist," "The Nature of the Beast in the Papal Bull," and his beautiful address to children, "Buttons for the Young Believer," will hold their place amongst the standard literature of the Church. We may further state that nothing but Lord Fripon's knowledge—a knowledge derived from personal observation—of the hon. and rev. gentleman's fitness for the office, has led to an appointment which will give the present

ministry yet another claim to the gratitude of a Protestant posterity."

This sort of thing went down better than well amongst the Protestants generally, and very especially amongst the Protestant ladies of Great Glastonbury.

"Really, of course, there could be no doubt about it; he *was* a dear delightful man," was the commentary of Mrs. Dubbelfaise on the new ecclesiastical move, as she tea-ed with her friends in that room of the "faith without works," whereat such gatherings were held to be legitimate, all making much, over their bread and butter, of knowing a real live bishop. But, as Mr. Harcourt said, "if all that was done here was not so well for the Church of England, nothing could have been better for the Church of Exeter Hall;" and this, and like to this, in other forms of speech, was spoken of the bishop designate.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANATHEMA MARAN-ATHA.

THERE are many ways of welcoming back a bishop designate. In this matter the ladies, when they try, very greatly take the lead. Perhaps the form that the measures of such satisfaction take are hardly so legitimate as they well might be. A man who has gone his way a rector, and come back to all intents and purposes a bishop, is in no common manner a subject for other than strong ecclesiastical attentions. It may be that though he has passed through a good deal, he still is to be got to take his meals. Then come up the varied forms of competition, amongst those who give dinners, as to who shall of all first in public feed the "Successor of the Apostles." Nor are the many ways by which such a man is to be got to table always wholly of a religious character. Whoever shall get priority of a man so endowed, feel that they may well ask their friends to meet the bishop designate—such a movement not only witnessing that a real live bishop is actually known, but that he thinks the better of you than he does of your neighbour, a preference which he declares by coming to your table first.

With this sort of great matter were the ladies of Great Glastonbury just now chiefly busied. Mr. Slie gave out that for a little season he should come amongst them before his consecra-

tion, and the consecration of such a man was but very little likely to be a barren affair. A successor of the apostles in these times, too, Mr. Slie had not taught his congregation to believe in, but it was to do a great deal for the well-doing of the celebration to create for Mr. Slie such a character. Mrs. Slim said, with some diffidence, that Mr. Slie had always promised to come and see her directly he returned, so she supposed he would come to her first. Now, Mrs. Slim was much more than casually a poor gentlewoman; and though Miss Todhunter was very far from being a reviler of poverty, she really wondered "What Sarah would do if he came, as she often said she could so hardly feed herself."

Mrs. Dubbelfaise said nothing, but this did not the more show any absence of action or purpose on that lady's part. "I'll tell you what, dear," she observed to Miss Todhunter—Miss Todhunter, being of spare habits, had accumulated—"wouldn't it be nice if Jobson takes his four gray horses to meet the dear man when he comes? It's nonsense what Sarah says, I'm sure he will come to you first. You shall be at home to welcome him, and have a few little nice things down stairs, that he may like, and I will be there to meet him at the station, so that the poor dear bishop will get away quite comfortably."

Miss Todhunter thought that of all things this would be very nice. "Wait a minute, Tilda, dear," and Miss Todhunter, with the time that she now gained, got out her little slate with the sponge and pencil, and calculated as near as might be what would be the cost. Seeing that

the figures almost overgrew the slate, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who was always warm in proportion as she did not pay, reminded her friend "that it was hardly a fit thing to calculate the expenses of entertaining one of God's highest agents;" so Miss Todhunter put away her slate, taking no further thought of what it might stand her in to entertain the agent who was coming to her board.

"And wouldn't it be nice, Toddie dear, if you threw a few festoons across the road; they would come so well from you after his dedication of that beautiful little work on the Immaculate Conception?"

Miss Todhunter, who had forgotten all she ever knew of the Immaculate Conception, on the strength of Mr. Slie's coming, ordered the festoons, and the leading pastrycook was laid under commands to set on for a bishop designate.

It was a beautiful day when Mr. Slie was welcomed back to Great Glastonbury. The ladies had told him nothing, for all that was to come was to be a surprise. The bishop designate, by the programme, was to reach the town by four o'clock, so, at half-past three, Jobson's four grays stood in front of Mrs. Dubbelfaise's door. Half such an hour as that Mrs. Dubbelfaise never expected to live again. They were great moments for her, and perhaps they were something the greater when she remembered that they cost her nothing.

At three minutes past four Mr. Slie was seen to issue from the station, loudly cheered, leaning on the arm of Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who, although it was against her faith, and would have been a

heresy at the "faith without works," was willing just then to believe that she did lean on the arm of a successor of the Apostles.

Their progress through the town was one long ovation; the first festoon, swinging in its majesty, was thrown across the road from the "faith without works," and fastened to a chimney of the little Bethel on the other side. This was to show that all interests were united in this demonstration to so great a Protestant. Without any orders, the four grays were taken back by Jobson—Jobson himself did this great job—from whence they came, to Mrs. Dubbelfaise's door.

"Oh, dear me, I forgot," said Mrs. Dubbelfaise, with great acquired innocence, to the proprietor of the barouche of triumph, just so as the bishop designate might hear, "Mr. Slie is expected by Miss Todhunter."

"Indeed, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, if you will allow me, I will stay with you, if you can take me in for to-day; you are one of my oldest friends, and it would please me so much if it is not inconveniencing Miss Todhunter."

This little speech from so great a man, delivered in a voice that all near might hear, was quite the finishing bit of Mrs. Dubbelfaise's success that day.

"Oh, of course, my lord," said Mrs. Dubbelfaise—who anticipated by a little the actual consecration—"if you can put up with my humble means, and Miss Todhunter shall meet you here; it will be so nice;" and it was all the nicer when Mrs. Dubbelfaise ordered Jobson to fetch Miss Todhunter in the hired car, which was Miss Todhunter's for that day.

When Miss Todhunter did arrive, of course Mrs. Dubbelfaise was able to explain all. "I did so want the dear bishop to come on to you, but he said he would stay here quiet to-day; it was not my fault, Toddie dear, for I know how you would feel it: but you can't tell how he admired your sweet festoons."

Miss Todhunter subsequently received Mr. Slie in the character of the second-best lady in Glastonbury; she might have gathered, from the appearance of Mrs. Dubbelfaise's table, that perhaps Mr. Slie was not wholly unexpected; but Miss Todhunter bore all she had to bear in the main very pleasantly and well, and not the less though her slate did tell her that whilst the result was equivocal, the cost was not.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise had very long made up her mind as to the way a bishop designate was best to be received; and after that ride through the town in Miss Todhunter's barouche—which was as nearly like a car as the creation of Jobson could make it—the position of Mrs. Dubbelfaise was not at all what it had been. She determined well within herself to throw open her rooms and invite the town to meet the bishop designate upon her floor. Indeed, after that ride, people would talk of Mr. Slie as Mrs. Dubbelfaise's bishop, and so coupled, it was hard, she believed, for the best families—those families whom Mrs. Dubbelfaise had hitherto only known by name—to stay away. But Mrs. Dubbelfaise did find some little difficulty in getting rid of these small difficulties. Great Glastonbury, for the matter of that, was like any other town or village near to London. Society

there was cut up into tiers, and Mrs. Dubbelfaise had never been asked up to the grand one yet. There were those who visited at the Foxmores' and at the Lord of the Manor. Then there was the leading solicitor, who never bowed to any one below the other solicitor, who in *his* absence was likely to become a leading man. Then the merchant-families were tolerably well received by the paternal families. The wife of an army surgeon, a woman of appalling mien, had a long time given out that she only visited at the Rectory and the Manor House. Then there was that barrister, who had been called to the bar once, but never once since, who was churchwarden, and being an old inhabitant, patronized those people who came, if they happened to live in the larger houses. Then there was that other barrister, who thought himself a great way higher than the man who wrote, as though the great man who writes is not where the great man at the bar can never get to reach him.

Indeed, the visiting in Great Glastonbury was regulated pretty much on this fashion. The proper thing was to call on those only who were received by the governing residents, an exception being generally benevolently permitted in favour of those who rented the larger houses. The man with a mind, who lived in some little terrace, was not thought to be a companionable person, and the want of room in his house was all against his becoming the more popular. This sort of thing anywhere near to London is to be expected; for the great city man is, of course, not to be known and nodded to in an hour.

These were the interests that Mrs. Dubbelfaise had to unite, and if a bishop designate could not bring about the necessary harmonies, it was clear that visiting in Great Glastonbury could not be got round.

Miss Todhunter said she would help, and bring her little maid, which was known to mean that she would pay something; and Mrs. Slim said she would come in the same manner, which was known to mean that she would pay nothing. However, when Mrs. Dubbelfaise opened the folding-doors of her two parlours, and the full *coup d'œil* was realized, the pastrycook remarked he could "sit a good few." Mrs. Dubbelfaise said it was to be done for five shillings a head; but Miss Todhunter, who had got over the business of the barouche, said she would make it two-and-sixpence more, and for that the confectioner declared "he could turn out a noble thing."

The great day came, and the great night came, and the people began to arrive about half-past nine; the great struggle being of course to be the last. They were received by Mrs. Dubbelfaise, and passed on to the bishop designate, the bishop designate coming in for all that congratulation which he missed in the triumphal car. Then the best of the festoons had been brought in from the road, and hung in many taking devices about the room. At about ten o'clock the Bertrams arrived, and with their party was Miriam May. Mrs. Bertram had been asked to bring a friend; so, whilst Mrs. Dubbelfaise and the bishop designate could only say they were very glad to see the Bertrams and their friend, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, smiling very

sweetly—it was that lady's other smile—took an early opportunity of saying to Miriam, that her dress did not fit so well as it might; "I should have thought, my good girl, *you* would have known how to make a dress fit by this time." This assumption, on that lady's part, having very particular reference to those other days, when "Mrs. May, milliner and dressmaker," was written on the great brass plate.

The business of the evening had a certain tendency to melancholy, but Mrs. Dubbelfaise argued that when you had a bishop designate in the house, it was no time to make a noise. However, Mrs. Dubbelfaise and the bishop designate were often seen together whispering, and whilst all women like well to whisper to one another, they like it so much the more when a bishop designate lends his ear.

There was coffee and conversation, and then a little severe sacred music. The children of the schools, drawn up out of the way under the sole direction of Mrs. Slim, sung Watts's hymns at various intervals. I had joined the Bertram party, and soon found myself sitting near to Miriam May. Even by the side of Gertrude Bertram there were those who cared to look at Miriam May. Miriam had never gone through before all she had to go through then; and perhaps she felt that the eyes of many were turned upon her, for I soon found that she had stolen away to a corner by herself. A ladies' whist club there was in Great Glastonbury, as well as a "charity club," and Mrs. Slim and Miss Todhunter, being both members, did not at

all see why the coming of a bishop designate should keep away their whist. So, whilst two or three more sacred songs were tolerated in a manner that was hardly sacred, and whilst certain compared the one with the other how much better than the other they knew the bishop designate, Miss Todhunter and Mrs. Slim—for the children of the schools had had their cake and negus and been sent away—had got two elderly ladies of means to join them, and whist was fairly established under the very eyes of the great “Evangelical.”

Now it so happened that Mrs. Dubbelfaise’s only child, the “boy-*e*” of other days, was just then at home with his mother for a little while. This gentleman, who hardly thought so much of a bishop, either before or after consecration, as did his mother, not only wanted to compromise the character of such a house by dancing, but moreover, more than he cared to tell, wanted to dance with Miriam May.

“Mother,” he said, “what’s the harm of a little dancing? Clear away the things, and I shall begin with Miss May.”

“Heaven forbid!” said Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who saw by anticipation the workhouse girl in the arms of her son; “dance with Miss May—with a milliner—with a girl whose mother—well, never mind.”

At this crisis of the lady’s charity, the great Protestant bishop designate rose from his scat, coughed a very little—it was his pulpit cough, and not dangerous—and the buzz of conversation was stayed to listen to the great man.

“My dear Mrs. Dubbelfaise, as I have your

permission—let us pray;” and the bishop designate, in the midst of those who played cards and sang sacred songs, kneeled down there and then to pray.

“Hearts are trumps,” proclaimed Miss Todhunter—for the souls of the ladies were in the pips—as she fell upon her knees.

“And I have got a good lot of them, too, Tod,” said Mrs. Slim, who was not Miss Todhunter’s partner, throwing herself into the same position. Whereupon the bishop designate began to pray.

What he so prayed for was that a great and withering curse might come upon the ministry of a clergyman of alleged “High Church” opinions, who lived some ten miles off.* I do not know how it was I kneeled there to hear the anathema which came from the lips of the great “Evangelical;” but before I could well get away I felt a hand upon my arm, and heard a cry which brought the pray-ers to their feet; and then all I could hear were the words of Miriam May, as she struggled to drag me back from where I was.

“Come! see, *I* can save you yet.”

As one of the pray-ers had kneeled, a muslin curtain had been forced too near a light; the draught which came through the open door had carried the flame against the curtain, and when I turned round at that cry, I saw the flames had gotten a great hold, and that, but for Miriam, in a minute more it would have gone hard with me.

* As it may be convenient to treat this as an exaggeration or a calumny, I have to say that it is simply true.

My escape was even then in doubt, and but for her cry, from where I was, I could not well have got away.

The scene was such as before or since I have never seen. There stood the pray-er, and here was the curse, which he prayed for, come to him.

There was a long struggle to get to the door, and though the flames, seizing on the rout-seats and other hired things, spread at a wild speed, the people and the bishop designate did in the end all get away. Where I had kneeled so short a time before, the fire had its greatest hold. I did what I could to save some; I dragged Mrs. Slim from beneath the card-table, which had been overset upon her, and having seen the Bertrams safe, returned to help those who were so hotly pressed. Miriam never left my side; and whenever I turned to look for her, I saw that her soft, loving eyes were fixed on me. Wherever I was, there she came; and once I remember to have said, as the fire seemed gathering round us and following our every step, "Miriam, escape whilst there is time, I will follow;" but that altered nothing her firm purpose, till I was safe, to follow me.

We all well reached the street, and by then the flames, which now roared where the curse went up, had burst through the windows of that second-floor suite, where the orgies had been held. Then the room above shone brilliantly, and as the fire rose up and beyond, the flames shot through the housetop, till they were seen even above those hills for many miles around. When the last had safely reached the street, I had hurried on with

the Bertrams and with Miriam May, and saw the end of Mrs. Dubbelfaise's house from the fields. Once, as Miriam turned to me, the red glare of the great fire fell upon her face. "You are safe," she said, her whole soul seeming to rest in those words, which were almost a cry,—“ God did let me save you ;” and she seized my hand as though to feel that all her joy was not then mocking her. I walked on, speaking nothing of what I thought ; and as I neared the Bertrams' house, I had ceased to remember that Miriam's hand was still in mine. Thinking of this, it came to me that, as the curate in charge, such a thing might perhaps be wrong, and I would have dropped her hand ; but as she looked so fixedly in my eyes, I seized her hand again.

“ God bless you, Miriam !” I said, as we parted ; and as I spoke there was a great crash, and the flames had taken to themselves the house where we had so lately been, not one brick standing on another. But with what light there was left, I could see that in Miriam's eyes were tears ; she said something that was spoken very gladly, and was gone. Those were tears which, from the joy whereout they welled, I thought would not have blistered where they fell.

CHAPTER XVII.

FIRST LOVE.

It was not because the house of Mrs. Dubbelfaise had been so burned away, that the Hon. and Rev. Calvin Slie was not very soon elsewhere made at home. He the rather got a good deal of profit to himself by reason of his anathema. It was said he had been cursing the many things of Rome when the fire began, and there was cause sufficient here to make a lesser man a great one. But when it was known—as without any particular loss of time it was—that he did in a hard manner curse his near neighbour, the most charitable people went very much for Mr. Slie, and very much against Mr. Slie's near neighbour.

The charred belongings of Mrs. Dubbelfaise had been secured. She had been an insuring woman for many years; and as her insurance covered all that there was to cover, and things other than those which were coverable, Mrs. Dubbelfaise was in such a manner a gainer, that although she was a great deal too charitable to like anathemas, she was not quite so sure she did not like fires.

Miriam May and her mother were now fairly settled at the Bertrams'. Mrs. May was again for doing dairy work, but Mrs. Bertram did not keep cows, and in her genial woman's heart she was always glad to do anything which brought her

nothing, whilst to others a great deal. Did I not know Mrs. Bertram, I might say this could not be; she had heard what was said by those who did such a large trade in charity; indeed, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who, to do her justice, did ever tell people what she knew they would the least like to hear, did wonder aloud, "How it could be that Mrs. Bertram took up with a woman whose husband had been from the first God knows where?"

Mrs. Dubbelfaise thought it said very little—if it said anything—for one who tolerated a woman who had clearly had a baby, but had never had a ring.

"I should hope she behaves pretty well, and does not give you much trouble, my dear Mrs. Bertram," said Mrs. Dubbelfaise on one occasion, who hoped very much the other way; "poor creature, really of course there's no doubt about it; 'ma always said it was such a bad case, and when they came to want, never did encourage my giving her halfpence; but she has had a great many years to repent."

So of years had Mrs. Dubbelfaise perhaps had more; but Mrs. Bertram, who did not belong to the "charity club," or any such Christian-like society, said, "If Mrs. May has come short of what she might, I cannot think, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, that you or I should so condemn her; we are sinners all alike."

"Indeed, you must excuse *me*, Mrs. Bertram; but really, of course, there's no doubt about it, here is *my* ring, and here is a bit of *my* late husband's hair. I very seldom talk about such things, but I never did hear that Mrs. May had

one ring, or that she was at all particular as to one man's hair."

"Mrs. Dubbelfaise," said Mrs. Bertram, "I do not profess to be a charitable woman, but I would rather believe her innocent than what you would proclaim her; we may all have a great deal to answer for some day, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, and it will not be so well for us who judge, when we come to be judged."

To this Mrs. Dubbelfaise, who was eminently a religious woman, and very comfortable in the matter of the ulterior disposal of her soul, answered, "My dear Mrs. Bertram, where society asks so little, would it not be well if this Mrs. May could show her ring; there is so much imposition nowadays?"

"Cannot you believe this woman in the absence of her ring?" said Mrs. Bertram—who thought Mrs. Dubbelfaise, in those various religious societies in which she moved, might have had special opportunities for getting hold of such a belief—"or does faith without works like just a little to sustain it?"

Mrs. Dubbelfaise did not like this little thing which had been said; nor did she care what "faith without works" might want, or care to do without; so she turned the subject, and pleasantly asked Mrs. Bertram if she liked the preacher of the last Sunday, because she happened to know Mrs. Bertram had not that day been to church, and said how much good she thought came to people from their knowing bishops, because it also so happened Mrs. Bertram did not know a bishop; and because of Mrs. Bertram's reference to the

“faith without works” called her “dear” a great many times.

It was soon after this that I heard of what was owing from Lady Foxmore to the Mays. I was often at the Bertrams’ now. I often went in there to rest when I visited my people, and I often went in there to rest when I had ceased to visit my people for the day. Mrs. Bertram, with all her loving woman’s warmth, did many things—kind things, that she would let the world know nothing of—to Miriam and her mother.

Sometimes, indeed, Mrs. May would hold out her hand where there was still no ring, and sigh and look at Miriam, as though she seemed to feel that some might look upon her child, and feel that she was one of shame; but Mrs. Bertram, who at no time thought of this, would not hear of their leaving. Mrs. Dubbelfaise did not know but what visiting the Bertrams, with such people harboured in the house, might compromise her character, and Mr. Slie, one of the last things before his consecration, had said, “He thought it a pity so much encouragement was given to such a woman. I, indeed, feel for you, my dear Mrs. Dubbelfaise,” continued the bishop designate, in a tone which the lady thought well befitted one so nearly an apostle; “you, my dear friend, who have done so much for the moral elevation of this town—it is perfectly shocking; it is the evil of the age, Mrs. Dubbelfaise.”

Not a long time after so saying, this good and Protestant man was made a bishop, and became, in a manner, less actively concerned about the evil of the age.

I got Miriam to make out what Lady Foxmore's account with them was: it came to some hundreds of pounds. Half would have kept away the cough, and the fourteen divisions of the bread, and would have got that easy chair, and the whole holiday among the hills, and many third-day mackerel.

This bill they had long ceased to send in; Lady Foxmore might have had, perhaps, ten such; but Lady Foxmore would not have paid for many more than ten. Lord Foxmore passed for an honourable man; he had a great many times paid what Lord Diskount had a great many times owed. It was said, too, that Lord Foxmore had a character to lose. Any man who gives a pump, or such other medium, free of all waterworks, to a town council, is held to have a character to lose. I felt there must be a strong hold on the man who had so large a thing to keep up; and it was as well I should do whatever I thought best, before by any sudden calamity Lord Foxmore's character should go. So I overpersuaded Mrs. May to send in the bill to the earl.

Miriam copied it out very neat and clean, and it went by hand to Diskount Hall. Lord Foxmore was not well pleased when he got it; he even said, "These cursed things are nothing to me;" but, in a note, Miriam had hinted something of its having been some time owing, which might be much to him, so he asked his countess what it meant.

His countess was well able to tell him what it meant. It might be of some sort of charity, but it would not be of any sort of truth, to say that Lord Foxmore cared how long it had been owing.

He was a great way above caring for such little things, for the sake of the little things, or those, perhaps, whom they most affected ; but the Mays had been taken up by the Bertrams—it was the talk of the place. The Bertrams might get to speak of it, and he would yet have to pay, whilst his character was gone.

“How long has this been owing, Adelaide?” said the earl, holding up the bill.

“Oh, that little thing—let me see if I know it. Well, perhaps it *has* been sent in before.”

“And before that, I think, Adelaide,” said the earl, who allowed his wife so much, and who was known, because of his character, and because of nothing else, to have gone sometimes beyond what he so allowed. “I should wish to know if it has been often asked for, as there are items which seem of a long standing.”

The countess of Foxmore, who knew there might be items respectably aged, said, “Let me see,” which she need not have said, “perhaps half a dozen times.”

“And, perhaps, a dozen?” said Lord Foxmore.

“Well, I do not know but what it may have come a dozen times.”

“Adelaide,” said the earl, “this is not wise.” Lord Foxmore did not say it is not just, for that would not have much affected him, but this want of wisdom did. “It may be talked about; these poor devils have tongues, and you should recollect we have a character to lose.”

The countess of Foxmore believed that, as a countess, in a mysterious manner, perhaps she had; but, as a woman, she did not know so much

about it. The earl rose from his unfinished breakfast, and looking very grave indeed before his writing-table, took up his pen and said, "You see, Adelaide, what this imprudence leads to; I must apologize to the woman now."

"Apologize! why, you can't know what you say."

But for once this imputation did not rest.

"Cholmondeley"—this was Lord Diskount—"is, I believe, returned on popular principles for Great Glastonbury. I shall apologize to this woman as a matter of precaution, as a matter of business," and so Lord Foxmore did; and for the first time, and perhaps for the last, the "people's man" brought something to the people.

Miriam and her mother got the cheque; it was for five hundred pounds, and Miriam and her mother began to think what they would do with this great sum.

There were not now many days when I did not at some time go to the Bertrams. Miriam, I could see, as I had long seen, was very glad to meet me, and such circles as those which Mrs. Dubbelfaise led would have said, she came out to meet me over far; but, then, this might be only said of fancy, not of fact; for charitable people did not come in great crowds to see the Bertrams.

Miriam, during the time she had lived at the Grange, had only learned what her mother had the time to teach, and, perhaps, of such time there might well have been more; for Miriam, when she told all she knew, would not have been a long way up in a class at school; but then young ladies in such classes do not "know" a little.

When the Bertrams' house became the home of Miriam and her mother, Miriam soon began to learn a great deal that it was well she should learn. She could not, indeed, talk French with an English accent—a great matter for which so much is paid—nor was she sent to a “class,” with a refugee at the head of a long table; nor was she seen to whisper with girls of her own age; nor did she do any other thing that girls have always done. I generally found I could spare an hour three days a week, and then Miriam and I would read history together, and I taught her how to draw, and after a while—and not so long a while—when I was away, she took to drawing me. But I thought it might be well if Miriam and her mother would think over what they best liked to do with their money. Mrs. May could not do much, but it was thought Miriam might very safely teach a little. I began to think she could do better than teach. Most girls can; most girls cannot do anything that is for them a great deal worse. But Mrs. May said it must be that or nothing; she would not hear of any more sewing, and Mrs. May was not wrong in her determination that Miriam should not sew. A very little would have brought back the bright spot to Miriam's cheek, and more than that little was there in the sewing.

So Miriam and I were to see what could be done, and the time came when we were to talk it over.

Miriam May was very quiet over her drawing that afternoon; her upstrokes did not in any way go so straight up as they might; but perhaps

what had happened before that lesson had begun should be held in a manner to account for that. I had told Miriam I had heard of a living in the south of England, which I fancied might suit me, and that I had heard of a little house in Great Glastonbury, which might, I thought, suit them. Miriam said nothing—nothing when I talked of her staying north, and of my going south; but when she began to draw, she drew, as I have said, very badly. I was sorry that she had not seemed to like what I proposed; so I busied myself the more with the lesson, and then came the up strokes which went so many other ways than up.

I do not think I was at any time harsh to Miriam May; but perhaps that day I was too much the other way. Her pencil grew less steady, I thought she would never have given over shading one man's face, and I had not for a great while heard her sigh before, but the sighs came now very fast, and then came a big hot tear.

"Miriam," I said, "are you not well? Shall we put away the drawing for to-day?"

Miriam hid away her face, and very audibly she cried. Mrs. Dubbelfaise would have said, that now, if not before, a curate should have left; but I was in no mood to leave till I knew something, if not all, of Miriam's sorrow.

"Miriam, are you unhappy; has anything gone wrong?"

Nothing had gone wrong, but Miriam felt that a great deal was going in that direction, and she said, "If you go away, mayn't we come too?"

I had never thought that Miriam would have

cared to go, and certainly had never thought that such a thing in any parish, north or south, would do.

"Miriam," I said, "I do not think it could be managed; you will be very comfortable here, and people will—will say such things."

I was more than rather ashamed of myself, and I felt the look which Miriam glanced at me fell as a just reproach.

"I will be your servant," she said, "and mend your things, and help you in your schools, and mother and I *can* pay something now."

There are those who will think this very bold; but I do not think there are so many who could have seen Miriam as she spoke and thought so still. Miriam had left her seat, and was with red eyes looking over some of those drawings we had done together. Presently she came to one, on which she smiled. I was glad after her tears to see her smile, and I moved to where she was. It was I. The pupil, with a cunning hand, had drawn her master.

Miriam raised her lovely eyes, and I thought that to me she had never seemed so beautiful before.

"And why not?" were words spoken by me, but not heard, spoken by me to myself; "and why not?" The past came floating back before me, that past wherein I had once said, in the awful presence of Mrs. Perkisite, "Miriam, I will marry you, when I am a man, and then you shall come up stairs." And I *was* a grown man now, and Miriam *had* come up stairs; and what crept over me then, had crept over me before. Her heart did not look beyond the living to work for me—

and for me, I knew what her great love was. Society I might outrage, but with all society might think or say, I could not but love the girl who had come into the court at Chudleigh, who had burned that will, who had got me away from Mrs. Dubbelfaise's house, when I might have been burned. I had been a long while coming to this; perhaps I had not courted its coming; perhaps I had struggled to keep it back; but it had come now, and I said, "Miriam, you spoke of coming where I go; could you so love me as to be my wife?"

Miriam May had only thought to be my handmaid, to make my bed, to serve my meals. Miriam, I knew, wanted to be where she could be ever near to me, and where she would feel that not a little thing could part us.

She struggled to speak, but her tongue held back. Presently, what was a sound did come, and she seemed to say, "No! no! I am not fit for that, they say such things of mother."

They who said such things, said such and other things of all that God had ever fashioned pure and good, and I was insincere enough to say, "Then, Miriam, you do not love me?"

She turned her eyes towards me, and the full love of long years stood there.

"No! no! ask anything but *that*," and then Miriam May spoke as I had never heard her speak before.

"If I have ever loved you, none other have I ever loved. Sometimes I thought it was wrong. I knew that such as I were a great deal below you; if you would have let me come, I should

have been so happy; I could have worked for you night and day, and when you said you must go away, and that I must stop here, all that I had looked for was gone—gone all but this,” and she took up the image of me, which she herself had imaged out. “I will love you till I die. I will love you better than anything on earth; but I must not be your wife. *I* am the workhouse-girl—what would people say?”

In all that Miriam answered, I did not feel cast down. She had spoken of her love for me as a thing which was like to nothing else. People might say all that they were minded; and perhaps the more they said the less I felt that I should care.

So I spoke again of my not going south, but of our both staying north, and Miriam began to feel that if I did not care what people thought, the dream of many years was now like that which was very real. Miriam had thought it to be a joy beyond which no dream had ever left her, to love me. She did not think of being loved; and all this, and more, I saw was ebbing too and fro in her full heart, and when I said again, “Could you so love me, Miriam, as to be my wife?” Miriam, though in words she answered nothing, told she could.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE.

Mrs. SLIM had heard the news. That lady, as came kindly to her, had tea-ed with her two friends on the Wednesday evening—that being in the “charity club” a subscription night—and over the subscription cups it was told by the leader of those ladies, that the curate in charge was going to marry Miriam May.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise did not lose any very great deal of time in communicating with Bishop Slie on what had come to pass. That the matter, as presented by the ladies, did admit of ecclesiastical bearings, was decided over the subscription toast. But whether the late rector had jurisdiction, and could interfere, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, Mrs. Slim, and Miss Todhunter, all together, could not tell.

“I think I shall write to the bishop,” said Mrs. Slim, despoiling a shrimp of its head—the shrimps did not come out of the fund.

“Well, Sarah dear, really of course there’s no doubt about it, you can do as you please, only I *do* think the bishop knows me *rather* the best; he always thought you a good excellent creature, but at times carried away by your feelings.” At this Mrs. Slim did show symptoms of carrying out the meaning of these words, and Mrs. Dubbelfaise in the end did write; but as Bishop Slie was now

only a thing to be worshipped in Great Glastonbury, and not to be obeyed, it was so much postage for nothing. Still, as the bishop had left the parish to me, and as I was going to do that which amongst "the faith without works," and the "charity club," and such other governing bodies, should disqualify any curate, I resolved to see the bishop, who was not my diocesan, and resign the trust.

Bishop Slie saw me by his secretary. Bishop Slie was too new to his honours to be otherwise seen. The secretary was just then in much demand as a popular preacher before the organ at Exeter Hall. He had cast himself into the great Protestant struggle, and as the apostles preached by a lake side, he thought it rather like an apostle to preach by the shore of the lake in the Surrey Gardens. When I told him what had brought me there, he thought it well that I should see the bishop, and left the room to get me a hearing with the great Protestant prelate.

It was high noon before I ever got the hearing; and then the bishop's butler brought me in a *Record*, in which there was something like to a pleasing biography of Bishop Slie, and, setting down some cake and wine, said, "His lordship was sorry to keep me waiting, but he would see me immediately."

Now the bishop had a great reputation for the wine which he laid down in his cellar, but the preparation in the decanter did a very little to sustain it. Whenever he was asked to drink, he would say something which he had said a great many other times about the "lusts of the flesh,"

only of course something was added bearing a strong Protestant inference; then he had, it was said, a bin of rare old white wine somewhere, which he had christened "Calvin's wine," because "it protested against the errors of alcohol;" but though he might have fallen short of stimulating "the lusts of the flesh," by what he took of the juice of the grape, the bishop knew the real thing when he got it in his mouth; and what I had got in my mouth bore out very little of the reputation of the Calvin wine. But then the bishop expected a great many people would call, and be likely to wait, and here was a remedial measure.

Whilst I was so discussing the vintage before me, the butler again put in his head to say the bishop "would please to see me now."

The bishop welcomed me with much apparent cordiality, inquired very anxiously after his parishioners, hoped this old man was more comfortable whom he had been forced to leave in spasms, and that that old woman was out of her sufferings whom he had left with a cancer on her tongue. It was strange, I thought, that I had heard nothing of the spasms, or of the cancer on the tongue, but then I did not know that they were only grievous things growing out of the imaginings of Bishop Slie, that great Protestant prelate desiring to make it clear that he had worked in his parish with a will.

I explained the purpose of my visit, and urged my wish to throw up my trust, as I could not carry it out in a manner to please all.

"You will pardon me, my dear young friend," said the bishop, "but am I right in assuming

that you have sought my advice?" I bowed assent, and the bishop proceeded. "You know there was always some little suspicion connected with Mrs. May, and the birth of her child at the workhouse door, now many years ago. I say suspicion with all charity, for an honest woman, I must hold, can always show her ring. It would have been more satisfactory had there been any definite means of establishing a father, but these things are so distressing to me, that I was content in this matter to form no hasty judgment, and to be guided by those excellent ladies who, if given to run a little into those extremes to which all women are liable, could not but admit that appearances went against the woman. My friend, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, whose benevolence and charity I never heard questioned, finding herself forced to an acknowledgment that in this painful affair Mrs. May's character did not satisfy inquiry—Mrs. Dubbelfaise, I need not assure you, is not the woman, without much moving, to cast the first or any stone—but after taking counsel of me it was decided an example should be made. The woman was dismissed from a maternal charity, and, however painful it might be, Mrs. Dubbelfaise felt that she had done her duty. She was a sweet thing before she fell, a delicious thing," continued the bishop, as though he might still remember manipulating the golden hair; "in all charity I say, before she fell, for an honest woman would, somehow, in these four-and-twenty years, have found her ring. I——"

"My lord, you must pardon the interruption,

I did not come here to ask from you the history of the Mays, which I must hold to be as irrelevant to charity as it is beside the question. I do not know what it may take to assure a bishop, but, my lord, I believe the purity of that woman's life for these four-and-twenty years should set aside a worse suspicion. Mrs. Dubbel-faise has had a great deal to do with charity in public places; you have pointed to her whom I would make my wife, and laid dishonour on her birth. That taint, my lord, comes ill from you, and *there* can never rest. You have listened, and you have liked to listen to the false tongues of busy women, who have set up signs of charity to give a decent fashion to the wrong that they would do. My lord, I did not come here to remind you that you are a bishop; it pains me that your speech should ever cause me to forget your office. You have brought yourself to utter that to-day which you cannot justify, and which you do not believe. Thank you, my lord, I do not need to sit, and in this room would rather stand. If you would desire that I give up my trust, as from you I took it, to you I will return it; but I will not hear a word against the name or fame of Miriam May."

I had been carried away to speak that which I had never meant to say; but Bishop Slie knew what it was best to do under a great variety of circumstances, and on this occasion he thought it best to be very civil.

"My dear sir, Miss May is a charming girl, a sweet girl, just like what her mother was when she came to me now just four-and-twenty years

ago, and, between us, a great pet of my friend Mrs. Dubbelfaise. My dear sir, impossible, I cannot think of your going; you must stay and dine; I have just to see the precentor, and will be back in a minute."

But I was in no mood to dine with Bishop Slie, and though I did not tell him so, I let him understand that I had come on business, and could take my meals elsewhere. Having explained what brought me there, he went on to say, that I should be doing the patron of the living a very considerable service if—until his successor should be appointed, about which succession there must be some little delay—I would continue to hold the trust; and the purpose of my visit being so fulfilled, I took my leave, although the bishop pressed me to taste his wine, which seemed so unlike the vintage below stairs, that I thought it might have borne the Calvin seal; but although he assured me he had taken it of his predecessor's widow at a valuation, I did not give way before the prelate's pressure, and he accompanied me to the door, where he shook my hand in a manner more warm than I did his, and said, as though he might have always been an apostle, "God bless you, my dear young friend; say all that is kind from me to the ladies."

Mrs. Bertram was very glad indeed that I should marry Miriam May. She felt the risks were very few against my being happy, and she did not think that Miriam would be otherwise than happy too.

We were to be married from their house, and

there was no sufficient cause—not that there ever is sufficient cause—why what was to be should be delayed.

“Mr. Trevor,” said Mrs. Bertram, the day when Mrs. May had told her all, shaking me warmly by the hand, “it is not every man who might stand as husband by the side of Miriam May. I shall not pretend to conceal from you my belief that you are not unworthy of your destiny. I have known her father’s family some time, for Miriam *has* a father. I have seen him; I saw him abroad, when Miriam and her mother were in trouble. You should learn this now, for you took his child in faith, when the charitable by profession showed that their charity took all by clinging to a ring. Tell nothing of this to Miriam, yet; you will know all soon. I may not tell you more to-day.”

What Mrs. Bertram so said greatly occupied my mind. I knew she did not say what she did not mean; but whether there might be no father, and no ring, Miriam May was not the less to be my wife.

Miriam, now that she had entered on what was to her so new a life, soon showed that she could well fulfil the position to which she would be called. Miriam was in the full bloom of her rich womanly beauty, nor did her little white hand show dairywork or needlework. Had Miriam been called at any time to swell the loveliness of any court, that call would not have been to her too much. For a while she had been in some trouble about the future of her mother, but Mrs. Bertram made it quite possible to Mrs. May to make their

house her home, and the only thing to determine now was Miriam's wedding day.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise—who had taken excellent care that the old business of the missing ring should be revived in some force for this occasion—was heard to say, as she was coming back from a gathering at the “faith without works,” where she had been reading aloud about that woman at whom in earlier times no one was found to cast a stone, “she supposed the things were got at a cheap house, where such people, it was well known, did get their fine things.” Although Mrs. Dubbelfaise had in her time been to the Tottenham Court-road, and had got back to indulge in the belief that she had been to London, for her 'ma thought highly of that neighbourhood, Mrs. May had never heard of it or its advantages.

My brother, whose health had kept him abroad, was to be back in a month to marry us, and Miriam May and I were to enter on our blended life in the little church which stands high above the lake, near Ambleside.

The sun rose on as lovely a day as I have ever seen in early spring. I was to go on awhile before; there were to be no horses, and no carriages, not even Jobson with the fly, that he kept on purpose for such things. Miriam was to arrive, with the Bertrams and her mother, at the little church at half-past ten o'clock, whilst I was to be there to meet her with my brother and Mr. Mountaigne.

Indeed, beyond these few, the time and the place had been told to none, as the Dubbelfaise interest in some strength—perhaps even with a

'ma or two—was threatened, and we thought it well to stay this off.

Mr. Mountaigne, as my oldest friend, was to give Miriam away, and soon after the half-hour had struck, Miriam, with her mother and the Bertrams, arrived. They had all walked as though there was to be no wedding at the end. Miriam's bonnet might perhaps be new—Mrs. Dubbelfaise and others such, could have the better judged—and the dress she wore might be the gift of Mrs. Bertram; but in no other outward seeming was Miriam dressed to be a bride.

The church—which, as those who know it will remember, is no bigger than a large room—had stood there perhaps some five hundred years, and it seemed like the belongings of romance itself to be married there.

Miriam, I thought, looked pale, and she trembled as we first stood at the altar side by side; but as the clerk, an old man of seventy and seven years, said, if she should get a little faint, there was "a sup of water at Lake."

With this assurance of the great natural resources which were at hand, my brother took up the book, those there gathered round us, and the service began.

Miriam, though still pale, did not tremble now, and there was nothing to be heard but the sound of my brother's words, which were so soon to make us one, and the singing of the birds, and the ticking of the old clerk's great watch, which he had put up where we all might see, "if happen we had coom'd too late."

And now my brother looked up and asked,

"Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" and a voice other than Mr. Mountaigne's said, "I do."

My brother dropped his book, and the eyes of all were turned to see who had said, "I do."

The stranger stood behind, near to the mother of Miriam May. When he had been well-looking was not so long ago, and he was not ill-looking now; but from the sharpness of his even features he seemed older than he might have been. He stood erect with his arms crossed, and as we still turned as though to ask by what authority he had come to speak, he neared the altar, his eyes—as from the first—turned to Evelyn May, and so from the mother to her child.

Mrs. Bertram would have broken silence, but the stranger lifted his finger, as though, before all, he must first be heard. "Evelyn," he said, "do you not know me then?" and at the sound of his soft rich voice, the mother of Miriam May seemed as though she gasped for air, and the old clerk was all for going to the lake, whilst the tears which had been bidden came, and she fell forward in the stranger's arms.

"It is her place," that stranger said, as he kissed the pale lips which were struggling there to speak, "though it is four-and-twenty years since last she lay here; but see, she does—she knows me! Evelyn, my wife, my own!" and here the strange man dropped upon his knees. "Great God," we heard him say, "I thank Thee, that she does not hate or curse;" and the old clerk was called back to fetch such a chair as there was for Evelyn May, and the stranger stooped

over very gently, as gently as he might have four-and-twenty years ago, when he came from the box on the stage, and we all heard him say, "Evelyn, is this our child?"

We all stood back. Miriam left my arm, and looked straight and long into her mother's eyes. "Geoffrey, you have come; Miriam, it is your father;" and then she turned and said, "Geoffrey, this is our child."

It was a scene sacred to all who stood within that church that day. The old clerk, who did not know what it might mean, thought one or other must want water, and was soon busied to get it by the gallon. Husband, wife, and child, now had drawn aside. The father, for the first time, to kiss and to look upon his own, and those who were grouped round there, felt that other eyes might hardly look on such a meeting. "You are very beautiful, my child, beautiful as your mother was. Say, what is she called?—Miriam—Miriam, and do *you* not *curse*?" and he strained Miriam again and again to his heart.

Then he came up and shook the Bertrams warmly by the hand, and hoped that none would much condemn him for the interruption.

He then led Miriam to the altar, and placed her hand in mine, and knelt with his wife behind us. Before my brother took up the book, it was seen by all, that before all, Evelyn May now wore a ring. It is all over; none could ever put us twain asunder, and the marriage of Miriam May was on her mother's second wedding day.

Geoffrey May had a good deal to explain, and

I do not know but that he should have at last a chapter to himself.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise and her friends heard the news, perhaps, for the comfort of their charity, too soon, and tea-ed together the more especially to talk it over; and they might well so tea, for Miriam May had got a husband, and Evelyn May had found her ring.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RECORD OF THE RING.

WHEN the curtain had fallen on Evelyn Mervyn, it was no very long time before Geoffrey May—he who had so spoken from that box on the stage—was standing by her side. He laid at her feet the promise of his rich inheritance of much gold, but in that little theatre this had been laid at her feet before.

Geoffrey May said, “I love you so, that all I have shall be yours, and all I have not for you, I will lay out my life in the getting. You shall ride by my side in my carriage, which shall also be your carriage, and all the world shall do you homage; and, Evelyn Mervyn, you shall be my wife. I give you that love which to no woman has ever yet been given, and, by-and-by, I will give to this a title. I may promise, and I can fulfil. To-morrow, Evelyn Mervyn, I shall wait your words.”

Evelyn Mervyn hurried from the stage; she might have gone of course to Mr. Slie—and Mr. Slie just then was not so far from that scene as had been thought—but Mr. Slie would have busied himself with her golden hair; so she went home, and all that night through, till it had been some time day, did Evelyn Mervyn think on the words of Geoffrey May.

Evelyn Mervyn did not know what she should

say when he came to ask the answer to his words. She did not hate, nor did she love the man who had offered her so much of his carriage and so much of his gold; but Geoffrey May said he could come again, for it came of his heart to speak as he had spoken.

A month had passed on, and Geoffrey May one afternoon walked into the little room of Evelyn Mervyn. They had written often, and they had not written coldly. He did not speak of his carriage, or his gold, or of his title now. It was for the two hearts, and nothing else, to choose, and their eyes met—and that meeting meant that Evelyn could be all he asked.

Geoffrey May left for London next day, and returned, bringing with him a lady friend, who was to be with Evelyn till their marriage. No very great deal later, Geoffrey May and Evelyn Mervyn were married privately in Italy, and then for days, and weeks, and months, through the South they wandered, till it might be no love was ever like to theirs. They had been married away from England by reason of the father of Geoffrey May believing, as many other fathers do, in his own right to marry his son to whom he pleased. He had been pleased that his son should be married to a blonde woman of no mean means, and Sir Melville May thought that in this matter he knew the world something better than his son. But Geoffrey May could not be got to like the woman who was blonde, with means.

By-and-by, the old man—he was elderly by reason of that life which had baked the marrow in his bones—came to hear this son was likely to

marry a stage-player without any means, and not at all likely to marry the woman who was blonde and well to do. So the old man, who did not often think such things, thought the time had come when he should sit up and write a letter to his son.

Geoffrey one day seemed very sad, and all that he could do did not take away that frown. It was the first frown Evelyn in those married months had ever seen. She had never thought but that this present joy might always be, and perhaps she felt what she once had heard of the love which is not always as it was when first it grew. She had seen copy-books, by which her aunt had taught her in round and other texts, that said hard things of the world's love. She did not believe her husband could ever change, and she was not going to believe it that afternoon; so she knelt by his side, and laid her golden hair upon his knee.

"We have been very happy, darling," he said, as he gently took the little head between his hands.

His wife looked back—back on what had been—and thought so too.

"Why do you say we *have*, Geoffrey; why don't you say we *are*?"

"Evelyn, I sometimes wonder if you could love me as you do, were I very poor; some people think so much of being rich, do you?"

"Is that all, Geoffrey?" she said joyously; "oh, how I wish you could be poor, so poor, that you might try me."

"My father, Evelyn, says that all men should

be always making money; that they should marry for money—marry, Evelyn——”

“Why then, Geoffrey, did you say that you would not love me less were we both to get so poor? It was for better or for worse you took me.”

“Did I? yes, darling, so I did; was it for worse? well—well—there, Evelyn, never mind; I am all right now.”

“No, you are not, Geoffrey; not right at all. Why do you say such strange things? Have we been so happy, that it cannot last?”

Evelyn May had not been eight months married when she found it well to ask that question which the whole world asks, and the little golden head was once more nestling on the husband's knee.

“Let us go home, darling, it is getting late;” and they walked towards their home.

It was two hours after midnight, and Geoffrey May had not yet gone to bed. He was alone. He was sitting by the open window, a letter grasped in his damp and trembling hand. Presently a little voice came to the door, and he started up as his wife, who had some time slept, awoke, and not finding him by her side, had come to seek him.

“I shall not be long, darling, go and sleep; but stay—stay—kiss me, Evelyn; there—there, God bless you, my own!” and he took the little white figure in his arms.

“I am quite well, Evelyn; you must not mind, but it is very hot, and I can't sleep;” and Evelyn passed through the door, and Geoffrey May was once again alone.

“So he will cut me off, he will rob me, if he but hears that I have married this girl; be it so—to get this gold I must cast her off—her; but shall it not be that by-and-by, he who bids me cease to want, to live, shall come himself to dread to die?” And Geoffrey May thought of his little wife the more as he said this, and sank down torn, by a great struggle, and flung the letter from him. Had there been any very near, they might have heard him say, “No, no! Evelyn, Evelyn, they can never part us here—ah!” he started up. “What’s that? who spoke?” but no one spoke at all, it was only the sighing of the wind, and Geoffrey May walked to the window, and looked out upon the stars.

“A beggar he’d make me. He would like to see me come to want, to rot, to starve. I am a devil, I know that—but so is he; and what of that? he will never be my judge. Oh, my God! who shall judge us both, wipe out his crime, and let mine sit lightly on my head. Fool! what am I saying? Evelyn, Evelyn, you shall not curse me; come up, curse him; oh! what a hell this long night seems—it will be never day;” and he sank down, for he did not want to see the dawn that was coming on the sky.

“It is done,” he said, as he passed by where Evelyn now unconscious lay. Her golden hair was streaming over her snowy neck, and he knelt down beside her, holding his very breath, lest she should wake. She began to speak—she did not rest well—she was dreaming ill dreams.

“Geoffrey, they said that you will leave me; they all said it, and seemed to point at me; but

I knew that what they said was false. Oh, Geoffrey, take me away, don't leave me with these people here;" and as she said this in her dream, her hot breath fell upon his face. She put out her hand as though to feel that he was near.

"False! Evelyn," he said, as he looked into her calm, pale face; "no, they would have lied when they had said I was not false. Angel—wife—Evelyn—I must not stay, or I shall cease to be the devil that I am;" and he took her hand, and softly placed a letter in it, "and now," he said, "the ring."

"Marry her, Geoffrey, and until the day I die I will not cease to curse you; you shall rot—rot, and come to me for pence, and not get one."

These were his father's words, the words which he had written. It was done. There was no ring on that wife's finger now.

"God bless you, Evelyn, ever, ever wife," and he raised her in his arms, and kissed her, whilst the while he muttered that one word, "wife."

When Evelyn awoke hours after, and had read the letter, which through her long sleep her hand had grasped, she did not utter a great cry, or any cry at all, but for many hours, and for many days, she lay there very like indeed to die.

When she once more walked abroad, still was that letter in her hand, and those there were who said that amongst the golden hair was gray. Geoffrey May in that letter had written, "he did not know when they might meet again." He said she was as much his wife as though she wore a ring; and then he told her with what a withering and bitter curse his father would curse him. When

after those many nights and days she could dare to think again, she found it was nothing worse than that yet another woman in the world was given up for gold. Evelyn May found that nothing of her love had gone, but rather that it grew. She knew he would come back, and she clung to the words of him who had cast her off whilst saying so. In the future that time might yet be far away, but he had told her he should come—come back to her—and this man in the thing that he had done was yet trusted by this woman.

The day was at hand when Evelyn May should be a mother. There were those who by the police were for getting back her husband, but no one a great deal cared whether he did come back, or whether he stayed away, for he had left all paid; and Evelyn, with what little she had, went out of Italy for England. That they had been married in Italy was all she knew. They had never been long in any place, and though she had once heard the name, it had not rested in her memory. London was not the place where she could find much faith for such a story. When she began to speak, the most charitable people began to laugh.

When she reached the Thames she had not so many shillings; but such as she had, with a little contriving, served her until she came within some fifty miles of Glastonbury; and though it had been as summer in the south, Evelyn, as she journeyed, felt the cold. "If I can reach Glastonbury," she said to herself, "in time, it may yet go well with it and me." That which Evelyn had so longed for she now shrunk from with that dread

which might well have taken something from despair. There were to her no husband's arms at the end of the long travail in which she could lay the child that so soon was coming to the birth, and say, "Bless it; it is yours, and mine, and ours." It might be, when all the charitable should come to judge her, the world would say, that though hers, it was, perhaps, not his; and at those times, when she thought of this, Evelyn, as the east wind blew through her, did not change the blessing wherewith she blessed her husband for a curse. Sometimes she would so sink down, that what was in its coming like to death, was not nearly like enough to give her joy; and one night, where she lay down to rest, because her feet could bear her on no further, was at the workhouse door. The after-life of Evelyn May has here been told.

My mother in time came to hear her history, and though Evelyn could not tell where she was married, my mother did not for that the less believe, nor did her belief take any of its trust because the letter which Geoffrey May had left confirmed the truth of Evelyn's story.

Geoffrey May was well received by his proud father. His father said he was glad to see him, and so he was when he thought of the blonde woman.

"Well, Geoffrey, my boy, I thought you would not be the fool they said. Hark'ee, I'm better, and I say, just keep that parson out of the way; he doesn't like the women, and it's very natural that they don't like him. He is always talking about my dying, and going to the devil—it's *his*

trade, but then it isn't lively, and it isn't civil. I'm not going to die just yet; not until I have made that hundred thousand into two. I suppose you got rid of her easily, eh? But it's nothing to you or to me what becomes of such as her; it isn't likely she won't find some one else. Well, well, you can't do that sort of thing for nothing! Egad, Geoffrey, I'll always help you out of such a mess; only don't go and get married, or else——"

"What I have done, I have done. I do not reproach you for *your* crime—do you not call up the memory of *mine*;" and Geoffrey went away, and went out from the presence of his father.

Geoffrey May did not live the life that most men do, but Sir Melville May, his father, did. Sir Melville drank when it was night and day, and played *rouge-et-noir*, and knew women who rouged through all his nights and days; and he was minded that his son should drink, and like *rouge-et-noir* so that he could never give it up, and women who rouged, so that he could cast them off. Geoffrey May was not a great deal with his father, but when they came together, the elder of the two did all he knew to get Geoffrey to be like him.

One day Geoffrey May said to his father, who could not stand for the wine that was in him, "Were you not my father, I should not mind to see that the devil was so fast getting you, that I might speed you on to hell; but you are an old man, and some day soon you will come to die, and though you have made my days a hell

to me, I would the rather that you did not burn."

This might not have been quite the speech of an only son, but the old man took no thought of his hard words that night, or the next, or the next, or ever, even when he came to die.

Years had passed on, and one autumn time Geoffrey May met the Bertrams on the Rhine. They had travelled together, and after a while they became intimate. He heard that they were from Great Glastonbury, and at parting he asked them if ever they heard of one Evelyn May to let him know. "She may have a child," he said, "or a child she might have had, but the mother had golden hair." At least, it had been golden once to him. Geoffrey May thought it was near to four-and-twenty years since ever he had seen that golden hair. One day Geoffrey May received a letter from his father; that father and that son had not a great many times written to each other in their lives, so there might be something in the coming of this letter. It was very short:—

"MY DEAR SON,—Come and keep this cursed praying fellow out of the house. He says I am dying, and I'm not; I ought to know best. He will talk about my soul; I don't know what he means, and if I did, what's *my* soul to him? I want to have a word with you, for I don't think I'm very well.

"Your affectionate Father,
"MELVILLE MAY."

“P.S.—You can keep this Bible-reading chap away ; he says if I die as I am, which is no business of his, I shan’t be saved, and I am sure I look respectable enough. When I am put away he can’t get me out, so what’s the use of his talking about saving anything of mine, eh?”

Geoffrey May thought it well to go to his father. The old man was not very well, and never would be very well again. Two women sat by him, one on either side, the doctor was standing near, and a clergyman looking on. Sir Melville May sat in his great arm-chair.

“He is dying,” said the doctor, in a whisper. “He will die in his own arm-chair.”

A fancy was on the old man’s mind that he held in his hands a pack of cards. We perfectly could see his play ; he seemed to be taking up his tricks,—he thought he held another honour.

“Ah! Geoffrey, my boy, I didn’t think you’d see me looking so well,” he said, as he turned his glazing eyes towards his son. “Keep back that praying fool, he never knows when he’s not wanted, and he says the devil will have me ; but it is a mighty pity if he has me, and don’t take you, for we have never been parted yet,” said the old man, who tried to look up into the faces of the women who stood by his side. They saw what was coming, and the tears made channels down the paint.

“Ah! there he is in that corner ; it is the devil come to take me ; it is that praying fellow who has brought him. Shoot him, Geoffrey ;

don't you see he is there?" and the doctor said, "He often thinks this now, and we always fire off this gun."

"Eh, boy, you hit him; the praying fellow has told a lie; he has been here a good deal of late." The old man went on with his game.

"It's the odd trick," he yelled out, as well as he could, for the gurgling in his throat had then begun, and he would have got up, but that he sat as a corpse in that chair.

"He is dying," said the clergyman.

"He *was*, but he is dead now," the physician said.

It was only the day after that, Geoffrey, then Sir Geoffrey May, heir to two hundred thousand pounds, had the letter from the Bertrams. It told him that such a person as Evelyn May was now living with her daughter in Great Glastonbury. Sir Geoffrey was some little time delayed before he could answer Mrs. Bertram's letter; he received another, speaking of Miriam's coming marriage, the Bertrams having now found out the tie there was. He wrote back, "Say nothing to my wife or child, I shall be there;" but though he travelled hard, he only came as has been seen.

When Evelyn May once bore that child at the workhouse door, it was said by those who drove a trade in such a matter, that it was very well, but that what was well might have been better had there been a ring—and the name of this was Charity. When the mother of the workhouse girl, long after, was spoken of as Lady May, there were those who said that, well, she could be

nothing else, and they all along had known what she must be. They had never laid their tongues, they said, to doubt that ring, and now, because no one reviled, they would believe—and this thing, too, was Charity.

CHAPTER XX.

COMING HOME.

IT made all the difference in the visiting circles of Great Glastonbury, that the husband of Evelyn May should turn out to be a baronet. All who had known the woman without the ring were quick in telling that they knew this Lady May. I do not think there were so many who grudged to Evelyn her long-coming joy. She had been reviled—reviled for those four-and-twenty years, and the more chiefly by those women who had started a “charity club” to keep their charity from getting cool; but Evelyn May did not now put out her honoured hand, that those who had reviled might be in turn reproached. An outward sign went with her, and it was this in which she joyed; for the charitable, in a measure, felt comfort in those outward signs.

She had lifted up that hand in vain for many wearying years, and no one cared to notice it, except those busy mockers who came near to scorn; but now they as entirely believed, and grouped about her like so many sisters.

It might be, she had been a stage-player, and had borne a baby at the workhouse door, and had by a charitable provision been turned out of a hospital, and had churned, and had done much sewing for very little, and had begged for coals, and had suffered many other things, and because

she wore no ring. The decent people of the place, with all their charity, could well forget this now, and Evelyn joyed, she did not exult, she only felt "shame no longer has dominion over me;" and she would say in her heart, as she looked on Miriam, "The world need never whisper, darling, now, when I call you child;" and God, when He first took woman and put her in a garden, meant that that woman, and her seed for ever, should feel this. It was not this which filled her heart, "Society will smile upon me now; I shall lean on this man's arm, or stand by that greater one's right side; I can go where those who have reproached me will be reproached because I have come to this; and, beyond that, I can go where they may never follow me." Society had always meant that woman should feel this.

Miriam and I had been one month married. We were coming home; there had been no such month as that ever in our lives before.

Sir Geoffrey and Lady May came on the road to meet us; Sir Geoffrey was on his horse, and his wife was by his side. Miriam looked just as her mother did, when Sir Geoffrey took her from the stage.

We passed on, on past Lord Foxmore, who thought the change was quite enough to let him bow; and we yet passed on, on by the door where once was graven, "Mrs. May, milliner and dress-maker;" and on past the great house, where Miriam had worked from eight to eight; and it shows how much society can adapt itself to circumstances, when everybody seemed now very well indeed to know the woman they had never

cared to know for four-and-twenty years; and Mrs. Dubbelfaise met us with her two friends, before the "charity club," and Mrs. Dubbelfaise said, "Dear Lady May, it does give *us* so much pleasure to see you again."

This much pleasure was so entirely a new emotion, that it must be judged as an experiment.

I never saw a man look upon his child as that father did on his; and Miriam liked the new music of a father's words.

He had come back, not daring to believe what he might find. He had sown no pity, he had reaped this love. One day he dropped upon his knees before us all, and said, "My God, I pray Thee to give me one year of blessed joy like this, with those who, by Thy great mercy, love where they should hate;" and then he said, "Evelyn, the doctors tell me that I cannot live a year; but I would see the summer, and the winter, and the spring with you; and then, when your love is bound up with my life, then my punishment will be, that here there shall be no more life for me, or for my love."

Evelyn drew near her husband, and Miriam nestled in her father's arms. "So shall it be," he sighed, as he strained them to him; "so shall this tie tighten till it snaps."

The next day the Bertrams joined us, and the Mountaignes, and the next, and the next, were long glad days to all. Sir Geoffrey May had taken the Grange; he was to enter on possession in a month, and we all looked forward to that COMING HOME.

Then was the Sunday. A Sunday in Great

Glastonbury, when the workhouse girl should go to church as my wife, and when Evelyn May should stand there with her ring—to each this was a dream. I preached, and they sat in the pew, that I, as a boy, had sat in too. I do not know that I could not even tell my bishop, that sometimes whilst I preached I looked on Miriam, and then back upon the past.

Afterwards, Lord Foxmore came to me in the vestry, and said that Sir Geoffrey May might like perhaps to see me rector of Great Glastonbury, and that I might like it too. Lord Foxmore said he should like it for himself, and for the parish. He did not speak of his interest, as not so very long before he would. He said, “It may be yours, if you wish”—certainly, the earl did this very well.

We all went up to Diskount Hall that afternoon, to lunch, and talk the matter over. Perhaps it was a little strange to Miriam when she passed the housekeeper’s room; and had she talked of millinery, and how such things were made, the little slip might very well have been excused. Lord Foxmore was sorry that the Mays had ever been so near starving, whilst he was patron earl: not sorry because there was so nearly an inquest, and a parish funeral, but because of what he felt within him.

So did the living of Great Glastonbury pass to me.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise thought that now it might be time to call on the party at the Grange.

“Really, of course, there’s no doubt about it, we must go, Toddie dear.”

Miss Todhunter was perhaps a little wearied by the long dominion of her friend. The thing did not present itself to her in a manner by any means at all so positive.

"I don't think, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, that we have treated these people so as we may call upon them now. When they asked us to believe a long time ago, we turned one out of a hospital, and let the other beg her bread; if I go, it will be to beg their pardon."

Now, Mrs. Dubbelfaise was not only an institution of Great Glastonbury herself, but had long been a very material part of those institutions, "the faith without works," and "the charity club," and any one so great as this is some way above begging people's pardon. But then it was very necessary Miss Todhunter should go, for the distance was such that it was convenient to go in a fly; and Miss Todhunter's position was always a specific one when such excursions came about.

"Really, of course, there's no doubt about it, Miss Todhunter, you can go as you please; but don't you see, if we all go in a fly it will separately cost us very little?"

Whether Miss Todhunter thought less than she once did of riding with her back to the white horse, or more of the cost, or whether she thought she was of an age to judge for herself, must remain a matter of speculation; she only answered and said, "I cannot see my way, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, to oblige you in this matter."

"Oblige *me*, Miss Todhunter?" ejaculated Mrs. Dubbelfaise, quite in *alto*; "really, of course, I must say, if you rather would not, dear, *we* can

go, dear, alone. It is not the first time *I* ever visited a baronet. Sarah dear, you and I will go together."

Miss Todhunter coloured up a good deal, and felt she could answer that little bit about the baronet; but she thought better of it, and that day the three ladies did not tea together.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise and Mrs. Slim, although perfectly independent people, in the end did not ride to the Grange. Notwithstanding, from what had transpired, it did matter so little whether Miss Todhunter went or not, it made all the difference between walking and riding. They came on foot, and stayed lunch, and Mrs. Dubbelfaise said everything she thought the Mays would the least like to hear.

As they went away, Mrs. Dubbelfaise said, "Really, of course, there's no doubt about it, Sarah dear, Lady May is a very superior person, and Sir Geoffrey is a charming creature, and Miriam is a sweet girl, and I am sure I am very pleased *we* never judged them harshly;" and Mrs. Dubbelfaise smiled what was her sweet smile, and no wonder people said "she had such a sweet expression."

So Mrs. Dubbelfaise and Mrs. Slim visited, and on their way back reasoned.

By-and-by Miss Todhunter came in a fly, and before us all said, "She was very sorry—could we forgive her?" and she felt it had taken a great deal off her mind when she had done this.

Miriam and I now took possession of the Rectory.

For awhile I had to struggle against the many

prejudices of many people. The "faith without works" and the "charity club" gave place to healthier things. They were handsome premises, and in these days of perambulating preachers were for awhile preached in; but after a little time I got a night-school at one, and began a library for my poorer people at the other.

I don't say that I did this; God forbid that I should glory; but though it was said, I was a High Churchman, because I believed in the Articles to which I was sworn, and stood by the Prayer Book which I had promised on oath to stand by, and though the reproach was that of those who dealt in charity, I don't know that I ever sent any one to Rome.

But on the Sunday my church was full, and every day many came there, and by-and-by came many more.

There is no place on God's earth like that of the man who is at all the means to such an end. I could look on those friends who stood by my side, and feel that when we came to part, a goodly company might meet again.

I do not think the wife of any parish priest has ever worked like mine. Miriam came to the sick, she sat by the dying, she taught many to bless, she taught many to forget to curse. And the Bertrams, too, were not to us the friends that bore the friendship of society.

Gertrude Bertram has often been the last thing seen on earth by many who were passing to their rest; and it is not her beauty only that always we are all so glad to see. She goes here and she goes there on a mission of mercy, and no one

sees—it is only seen up there; and by-and-by, when it shall be that the beautiful things of the earth are gathered up, Gertrude Bertram shall not be wanting from that blessing throng. The little difference between Miss Todhunter and her friends has provoked a breach which Mrs. Dubbelfaise could not get over. “Really, of course, there’s no doubt about it,” she said, “for a poor helpless creature to be blown about like a feather for three-and-sixty years, and who but for me would have been taken in by everyone, to turn round now and judge for herself; really now, as ’ma says, people are *so* ungrateful.”

Mrs. Dubbelfaise put on a year or two to Miss Todhunter’s age, but then she never had a head for figures, and whilst in public she trusted herself to say no more.

Mrs. Dubbelfaise, it has been meant to be recorded here, was a hater of Popery; but in this matter, though her Protestantism had the stamp of Exeter Hall, she could behave like a pope, and excommunicated Miss Todhunter; but as Miss Todhunter wished to cease subscribing to the “faith without works,” and the “charity club,” Mrs. Dubbelfaise said it was well she did wish, for she, Mrs. Dubbelfaise, ruled the power of the keys.

Then this disturbed the harmony of the church arrangements. These three ladies had for many years occupied a pew wherein was a fireplace; Mrs. Slim being a spare woman, a little generous warmth was considered to be wise, and, indeed, during Mr. Slie’s discourses, when the fire drew up, it long had been one of the most

comfortable places in the parish; but as Miss Todhunter ceased to pay, the stove soon ceased to be.

One day Sir Geoffrey said to me, "There are those here who have been so long dishonoured by me, that by me they must be brought before the world; Evelyn and Miriam must go to the queen's court, and kiss the queen's hand."

My father-in-law in this matter was not to be over-persuaded, and when the next spring came round, we went before the queen.

As we drove to the railway from the Grange, we passed the excellent establishment where Miriam once had spitted blood upon that dress. We could see many faces within, faces which Miriam knew, and since Miriam had been married she had not forgotten her old friends; and at the trade door stood the man who still carried out the bonnets. Miriam waved her hand to him, and he too had not been forgotten, since things with us had been so bright.

Sir Geoffrey and I kissed hands at the first levee, and then the day drew on when Evelyn and when Miriam were to stand before their queen.

As we rode up to St. James's, I had many a thought for what had been. She who was born at the workhouse door, and had lain in the arms of the parish officer, was there this day with nothing at all like her, so far as I could see, to stand beside her. And the mother who had been the stage-player, and had put up the brass plate, was there too; and as I thought of this, I thought of the baker and the butcher who had once peopled her dreams. I saw tears in Miriam's

eyes, and perhaps she, too, was with the things of that time, when there was no easy chair, and no holiday amongst the hills, and no third day mackerel to be had for them.

A carriage, very well appointed, passed us. It was Lord Foxmore's. Miriam had made millinery—with very long credit indeed—for Lady Foxmore. The next day it was said, in the *Morning Post*, that at that drawing-room all the world had looked on Miriam.

We went back to the hills again, with the great hope that we might never leave them.

By-and-by, as time wore on, Miriam called on me to love a son. Miss Todhunter had come a little while before to ask us “if we could lay the little one in a berceau-nette of hers,” and in Miss Todhunter's berceau-nette our boy was laid.

It was not much later that one of Sir Geoffrey's uncles died; he was at one time like to die, as his brother, Sir Melville, had died, but he thought in the end that he would not like to die eternally, and I do not think he perished utterly. He left the whole of his fortune to Miriam and myself, conditionally that we took the name of May. We took the name of May, and more than one summer has passed over us since then.

My boy is out of Miss Todhunter's gift, but a little sister has taken his place, and the little one is Gertrude, so called Gertrude after her god-mother, Mrs. Bertram.

“Why don't I die?” said Geoffrey May, one day. “My God, Thou hast been too good to me in this my coming home.”

CHAPTER XXI.

COME HOME.

It is June again, and some time past midnight. I have been called up to see an old man who cannot live till morning. Miriam still sleeps. I do not wake her, but kiss her as I pass out, and think what I should do if God just yet should take her. I feel that I am his servant, but I do not know how I could give her up.

I have closed the old man's eyes, and am coming back ; it is all morning on the earth, and as I come through the churchyard, Miriam, who has awoke and missed me, comes to meet me. There is but our own garden between the rectory and that churchyard. I called her "a darling thing" for so coming to meet me, and as we passed by the graves, some yet new and some grass-grown, I think again how little might come to pass, and she might lie there too.

As we walked on, I did, with my whole heart, try not to dread that sleep for her. We are in our garden now. She has picked a rose, and I said, "Miriam, darling, it is very beautiful this morning, and when it is very beautiful I think of death and the grave, and what is beyond death and the grave, Miriam, my own up there ; and I thought of you in death and in the grave, and I pray God, if He should take you, that not without

a rending pang but without a murmur, I might give you up. Until then, Miriam, the days of our lives must be even as that rose, for it has thorns.

Miriam laid her little golden head upon my shoulder, and held up the rose, and looked through me with her warm and balmy smile, and I could see that rose had lost its thorns.

“There may be many so,” said MIRIAM MAY.

THE END.

Superior Juvenile Works

PUBLISHED BY

ROUTLEDGE, WARNE, & ROUTLEDGE,

2, FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.

Price 7s. 6d. each, cloth gilt, or 8s. gilt edges.

GRIMM'S HOUSEHOLD STORIES. The choicest popular Fairy Tales and Legends of Germany and Northern Europe, collected by the Brothers GRIMM. A new Translation, complete in one volume. Illustrated with Two Hundred and Forty Engravings on Wood, designed by E. H. Wehnert.

ARABIAN NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS. A New Revised Edition of that translated by FORSTER. With Twelve large Illustrations, from designs by W. Harvey.

In this improved edition great care has been taken by the editor to rectify many passages that all previous publications required, without destroying the spirit of the original stories.

FOUR-AND-TWENTY FAIRY TALES. Selected from those of PERRAULT and other popular Writers, and edited by J. R. PLANCHÉ, with Illustrations from Designs by Corbould, Godwin, and Harvey.

"With the exception of those of Madame de Beaumont, few if any of the tales in the present volume have ever been placed in their integrity before the English reader. I trust that the chronological order I have observed in their arrangement will give them a novel interest in the eyes of those 'children of a larger growth,' who are not ashamed to confess, with the great reformer, MARTIN LUTHER, 'I would not for any quantity of gold part with the wonderful tales which I have retained from my earliest childhood, or have met in my progress through life.'"—*Extract from Preface.*

In crown 8vo. price 6s. each, cloth gilt, gilt edges.

THE CHARM OF ENTERTAINING STORIES; comprising Sixty Pleasant Tales by popular Authors. Including the "Little Lychets," by the Author of "John Halifax." With One Hundred and Forty Pictures by eminent Artists.

THE CHARM OF ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE: comprising History, Biography, and Natural History, by popular Authors. And One Hundred Pictures by eminent Artists.

SUPERIOR JUVENILE WORKS.

In small post 8vo. price 6s. cloth extra, or 6s. 6d. gilt edges.

THE FAIRY TALES OF THE COUNTESS D'AULNOY.
Now first translated into English by J. R. PLANCHÉ, Esq.
With Eleven Illustrations by John Gilbert, and a Portrait from original sources.

"For the first time, thanks to Mr. Planché, we children of every growth in this country have the Fairy Tales of the Countess D'Anois (whom we are now ordered to call D'Aulnoy) set fairly before us. Mr. Planché has treated them with all due reverence, translated them with strict fidelity, and issued them adorned with pretty pictures."—CHARLES DICKENS' *Household Words*.

In post 8vo. price 6s. cloth extra, or 6s. 6d. gilt edges.

THE BOY'S PLAY-BOOK OF SCIENCE: including the various Manipulations and Arrangements of Chemical and Philosophical Apparatus required for the successful Performance of Scientific Experiments in illustration of the Elementary Branches of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy. By JOHN HENRY PEPPER, late Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Polytechnic, &c. &c. With Four Hundred and Seventy Illustrations.

MR. H. MAYHEW'S BOOKS OF SCIENCE FOR BOYS.

In post 8vo. price 5s. each, cloth extra, or 5s. 6d. gilt edges.

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE; or, Young Humphry Davy (the Cornish Apothecary's Boy, who taught himself Natural Philosophy, and eventually became President of the Royal Society). The Life of a Wonderful Boy, written for Boys. By HENRY MAYHEW, Author of "The Peasant-Boy Philosopher," &c. With Illustrations by John Gilbert, and numerous Diagrams. Second Edition.

"A better hero for a boy's book Mr. Mayhew could not have found, and no writer would have treated the story more successfully than he has done. We have long been in want of a 'young people's author,' and we seem to have the right man in the right place in the person of Mr. Mayhew."—*Athenæum*.

THE STORY OF THE PEASANT-BOY PHILOSOPHER;
Or, A Child gathering Pebbles on the Sea-shore. Founded on the Life of Ferguson, the Shepherd-Boy Astronomer, and showing how a Poor Lad made himself acquainted with the Principles of Natural Science. By HENRY MAYHEW. With Eight Illustrations by John Gilbert, and numerous Drawings printed in the Text. Third Edition.

"Told with the grace and feeling of Goldsmith, and by one who has that knowledge of science which Goldsmith lacked. It is as if Brewster and poor 'Goldy' had combined to produce this instructive and beautifully-told tale."—*Era*.

BY CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

In fcap. 8vo, price Eighteenpence each, boards.

PETER SIMPLE.
MIDSHIPMAN EASY (Mr.).
KINO'S OWN (The).
RATTLIN THE REEFER. (Edited.)
JACOB FAITHFUL.
JAPHET IN SEARCH OF A FATHER.
PACHA OF MANY TALES (The).

NEWTON FORSTER.
DOO FIEND (The).
VALERIE. (Edited.)
POACHER (The).
PHANTOM SHIP (The).
PERCIVAL KEENE.
NAVAL OFFICER.

"Marryat's works abound in humour—real, unaffected, buoyant, overflowing humour. Many bits of his writings strongly remind us of Dickens. He is an incorrigible joker, and frequently relates such strange anecdotes and adventures, that the gloomiest hypochondriac could not read them without involuntarily indulging in the unwonted luxury of a hearty cackinnation."—*Dublin University Magazine*.

BY THE RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI.

Price 1s. 6d. each, boards.

THE YOUNG DUKE.
TANCRED.
VENETIA.
CONTARINI FLEMING.

CONINGSBY.
SYBIL.
ALROY.
IXION.

Price 2s. each, boards; or, in cloth, 2s. 6d.

HENRIETTA TEMPLE.

VIVIAN GREY.

BY J. F. COOPER.

In fcap. 8vo, price Eighteenpence each, boards; or, in cloth, 2s.

LAST OF THE MOHICANS (The).
SPY (The).
LIONEL LINCOLN.
PILOT (The).
PIONEERS (The).
SEA LIONS (The).
BORDERERS, or Heathcotes (The).
BRAVO (The).
HOMeward BOUND.
AFLOAT AND ASHORE.
SATANSTOE.
WYANDOTTE.
MARK'S REEF.

DEERSLAYER (The).
OAK OPENINGS (The).
PATHFINDER (The).
HEADSMAN (The).
WATER WITCH (The).
TWO ADMIRALS (The).
MILES WALLINGFORD.
PRAIRIE (The).
RED ROVER (The).
EVE EFFINGHAM.
HEIDENMAUER (The).
PRECAUTION.
JACK TIER.

"Cooper constructs enthralling stories, which hold us in breathless suspense, and make our brows alternately pallid with awe and terror, or flushed with powerful emotion: when once taken up, they are so fascinating, that we must perforce read on from beginning to end, panting to arrive at the thrilling dénouement."—*Dublin University Magazine*.

THE USEFUL LIBRARY.

In fcap. 8vo, price One Shilling each, cloth limp, unless expressed.

1. A NEW LETTER WRITER.
2. HOME BOOK OF HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY.
3. LANDMARKS OF HISTORY OF ENGLAND. 1s. 6d.
4. LANDMARKS OF HISTORY OF GREECE. 1s. 6d.

5. COMMON THINGS OF EVERY-DAY LIFE.
6. THINGS WORTH KNOWING.
7. LAW OF LANDLORD AND TENANT.
8. LIVES OF GOOD SERVANTS.
9. HISTORY OF FRANCE.
10. LAW OF WILLS, EXECUTORS, AND ADMINISTRATORS.

ROUTLEDGE'S ORIGINAL NOVELS.

In Fancy Boarded Covers.

- 1 THE CURSE OF GOLD. (1s.) By R. W. Jameson.
- 2 THE FAMILY FEUD. (2s.) By Thomas Cooper.
- 3 THE SERP SISTERS. (1s.) By John Harwood.
- 4 PRIDE OF THE MESS. (1s. 6d.) By the Author of "Cavendish."
- 5 FRANK HILTON. (2s.) By James Grant.
- 6 MY BROTHER'S WIFE. (1s. 6d.) By Miss Edwards.
- 7 ADRIEN. (1s. 6d.) By the Author of "Zingra the Gipsy."
- 8 YELLOW FRIOATE. (2s.) By James Grant.
- 9 EVELYN FORESTER. (1s. 6d.) By Marguerite A. Power.
- 10 HARRY OGILVIE. (2s.) By James Grant.
- 11 LADDER OF LIFE. (1s. 6d.) By Miss Edwards.
- 12 THE TWO CONVICTS. (2s.) By Frederick Gerstaecker.
- 13 DEEDS, NOT WORDS. (2s.) By M. Bell.
- 14 THE FEATHERED ARROW. (2s.) By Frederick Gerstaecker.
- 15 TIES OF KINDRED. (1s. 6d.) By Owen Wynn.
- 16 WILL HE MARRY HER? (2s.) By John Lang.
- 17 SECRET OF A LIFE. (2s.) By M. M. Bell.
- 18 LOYAL HEART; or, the Trappers. (1s. 6d.)
- 19 THE EX-WIFE. (2s.) By John Lang.
- 20 ARTHUR BLANE. (2s.) By James Grant.
21. HIGHLANDERS OF GLEN ORA. (2s) By James Grant.

BY MISS EDGEWORTH.

In fcap. 8vo, price One Shilling each, boards; or, in cloth, 1s. 6d.

THE ABSENTEE.
ENNUI.

MANŒUVRING.
VIVIAN.

"Sir Walter Scott, in speaking of Miss Edgeworth, says, that the rich humour, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact that she displayed in her sketches of character, led him first to think that something might be attempted for his own country of the same kind with that which Miss Edgeworth fortunately achieved for hers."

BY LADY CATHARINE LONG.

In fcap. 8vo, price Two Shillings each, boards; or, in cloth gilt, 2s. 6d.

SIR ROLAND ASHTON.

THE FIRST LIEUTENANT'S STORY.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

In fcap. 8vo, price One Shilling each, boards; or, in cloth, 1s. 6d.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

LIVES OF MAHOMET'S SUCCESSORS (The).
SALMAGUNDI.

KNICKERBOCKER'S NEW YORK.

WOOLFERT'S ROOST.

BY THE MISSES WARNER.

In fcap. 8vo, price Two Shillings each, boards; or, in cloth, 2s. 6d.

QUEECHY.

WIDE, WIDE WORLD (The).

Price Eighteenpence, boards.

HILLS OF THE SHATEMUC (The).

Price One Shilling, boards.

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER.

ROUTLEDGE'S C H E A P S E R I E S .

In boards, 1s. per Volume, unless specified.

Ditto 1s. 6d. „ marked (*).

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 5 Life of Nelson. | <i>Allen.</i> | 142 King Dobbs. | <i>Hannay.</i> |
| 6 Wellington. | <i>MacFarlane.</i> | 144 *Drafts for Acceptance. | <i>Raymond.</i> |
| 7 White Slave. | <i>Hildreth.</i> | 145 Twenty Years After (2s.) | <i>A. Dumas.</i> |
| 8 Uncle Tom's Cabin. | <i>Mrs. Stowe.</i> | 146 English Traits. | <i>Emerson.</i> |
| 10 Vicar of Wakefield. | <i>Goldsmith.</i> | 147 Our Miscellany. | <i>Yates & Brough.</i> |
| 11 Mosses from a Manse. | <i>Hawthorne.</i> | 150 Marguerite de Valois (2s.) | <i>A. Dumas.</i> |
| 12 Sir Robert Peel. | | 152 *Violet, or Found at Last. | <i>M'Intosh.</i> |
| 13 *The Arctic Regions. | <i>Simmonds.</i> | 153 Sam Slick in Texas. | |
| 16 Christopher Tadpole (2s.) | <i>Smith.</i> | 154 *Home and the World. | <i>Rives.</i> |
| 17 Valentine Vox (2s.) | <i>Cockton.</i> | 155 Shakespeare not an Impositor. | |
| 19 *India. With Plates. | <i>Stocqueler.</i> | 159 *Flood and Field. | <i>Marwell.</i> |
| 20 Wild Sports (1s. 6d.) | <i>Marwell.</i> | 162, 163. Vicomte de Bragelonne, 2 vols. | <i>Dumas.</i> |
| 22 Rome, and Early Christians. | <i>Ware.</i> | (5s.) | |
| 23 Gold Colonies of Australia. | <i>Earp.</i> | 164 Four Phases of Love. G. H. Kingsley. | |
| 24 New Zealand. | <i>Earp.</i> | 165 *The Garies. | <i>F. J. Webb.</i> |
| 25 What we Did in Australia. | | 166 The Lucky Penny (2s.) | <i>Mrs. S. C. Hall.</i> |
| 26 *Shane Fadh's Wedding, &c. | <i>Carleton.</i> | | |
| 29 *The Poor Scholar, &c. | <i>Carleton.</i> | 167 Moss Side. | <i>Harland.</i> |
| 31 Bundle of Crowquills. | <i>Crowquill.</i> | 168 *Mabel Vaughan. | <i>Cummins.</i> |
| 32 Christmas Day. | <i>Le Ros.</i> | 169 *Mutiny in India. | |
| 33 *Hobbs and Dobbs. | <i>Crayon.</i> | 171 Acting Proverbs. | <i>Harwood.</i> |
| 34 *Two Years before the Mast. | <i>Dana.</i> | 172 Greatest Plague of Life (2s.) | <i>Mayhew.</i> |
| 35 Representative Men. | <i>Emerson.</i> | 173 *Burns and Scott. | <i>White.</i> |
| 39 Hyperion. | <i>Longfellow.</i> | 175 *Billets and Brouaacs. | |
| 40 Reminiscences of a Physician. | | 176. Kansas, or Squatter Life (2s.) | <i>Gladstone.</i> |
| 46 Infidelity, its Cause and Cure. | <i>Nelson.</i> | | |
| 47 Russia as it is. | <i>Morell.</i> | 178 Aldershot and All About It (2s.) | <i>Mrs. Young.</i> |
| 49 *The Lamplighter. | <i>Cummins.</i> | | |
| 50 Turkey, Past and Present. | <i>Morell.</i> | 179 The Sepoy Revolt (2s.) | <i>Mead.</i> |
| 56 *Tales. | <i>S. Phillips.</i> | 180 Wild Flowers, with 171 Illustrations (2s.) | <i>Thompson.</i> |
| 63 *Hochelaga. | <i>Warburton.</i> | 181 Evangeline (1s.) | <i>Longfellow.</i> |
| 64 *Kaloolah, or African Adventures. | | 182 Rats, with Anecdotes (2s.) | <i>Uncle James.</i> |
| 65 *Sunny Memories. | <i>Stowe.</i> | | |
| 70 Shilling Cookery for the People. | <i>Soyer.</i> | 183 Bridle Roads of Spain (2s.) | <i>Cayley.</i> |
| 79 *Captain Canot. | <i>Mayer.</i> | 184 Forest Life (2s.) | <i>Newland.</i> |
| 91 The Mountaineer. | <i>Mayo.</i> | 185 *Tough Yarns. By the Old Sailor. | |
| 92 Burmah and Burmese. | <i>M'Kenzie.</i> | 186 *Life in a Steamer. | <i>Sam Slick.</i> |
| 93 Charades, Acting. | <i>Miss Bowman.</i> | 187 The Attaché (2s.) | <i>Sam Slick.</i> |
| 94 Young Frank's Holidays. | <i>S. Coyne.</i> | 188 Law and Lawyers. | <i>Polson.</i> |
| 95 The War. With Illustrations. | | 189 Marvels of Science (2s.) | <i>Fulton.</i> |
| 96 Pleasures of Literature. | <i>R. A. Willmott.</i> | 190 British Columbia and Vancouver's Island (1s. 6d.) | <i>Hazlitt.</i> |
| 101 Transatlantic Wanderings. | <i>Oldmixon.</i> | 191 A Lady's Captivity among Chinese Pirates. | <i>Fanny Loviot.</i> |
| 102 Ruth Hall. | <i>Fanny Fern.</i> | 192 Patchwork | <i>Howard Paul.</i> |
| 104 The Crimea. | <i>C. W. Koch.</i> | 193 Derby Ministry (The) (1s. 6d.) | <i>Mark Rochester.</i> |
| 105 Two Artists in Spain. | <i>M'Farlane.</i> | | |
| 109 *America and the Americans. | <i>Baxter.</i> | 194 Miles Standish and other Poems. | <i>Longfellow.</i> |
| 114 The Great Highway (2s.) | <i>Fulton.</i> | | |
| 117 Female Life among the Mormons. | | 195 Eminent Men and Popular Books. | <i>(2s.)</i> |
| 118 *The Watchman. | | 196 Prescott's Philip the Second. Vol. 3. | <i>(2s.)</i> |
| 120 Sebastopol, the Story of its Fall. | | 197 Burns' Poetical Works (2s.) | |
| 121 *The Song of Hiawatha. | <i>Longfellow.</i> | | |
| 122 *Robinson Crusoe. | <i>De Foe.</i> | | |
| 123 *Clement Lorimer. | <i>Reach.</i> | | |
| 124 Rose Clark. | <i>Fanny Fern.</i> | | |
| 132 *Solitary Hunter (The) | <i>Palliser.</i> | | |
| 136 Pottleton Legacy (2s.) | <i>Albert Smith.</i> | | |
| 137 *Whom to Marry. | <i>Mayhew.</i> | | |
| 140 *Light and Darkness. | <i>Crowe.</i> | | |

THE NOVEL OF THE SEASON.

Price 1s. 6d., boards, Fancy Cover,

MIRIAM MAY.

Notices of the Press

“‘Miriam May’ is a real romance, and it is well done.”—*Critic*.

“Bitterness is of various kinds, as well as various degrees. There is the mellow bitterness of the hop, there is the pungent bitterness of a Seville orange, there is the sour bitterness of quassia or of gentian; there is the bitterness of cynicism, of hatred, of disappointment; and there is perhaps a more reputable bitterness, having its root in a keen discrimination, and intense disapproval of falsehood and wrong-doing. The volume before us is of this last description; its acrimony is indeed acrimony, but it does not seem to spring from any selfish misanthropy or morbid disposition.”

We confess to have scarcely ever come across a work containing so much concentrated invective, or such relentless tearing away of the veils which society allows to conceal insincerity and malice. However, we believe, from the tone of ‘Miriam May,’ that its author has been animated by no other motive than a desire to lash, with merited severity, religious hypocrisy, and to administer a deserved rebuke to uncharitableness and malice. As such, we consider its remarkable popularity a most healthy sign of the times.”—*Literary Gazette*.

“‘Miriam May’ is a more than ordinary good novel; and, being so, has, in a few months, gained a very enviable—and certainly a very deservable—measure of popularity. When we add, that everything is wrought with constructive skill and technical ability, we are quite sure we have said enough to set our novel-loving readers craving for the book. It is but fair to them, however, and to the author, to add, that ‘Miriam May’ is not merely a novel.

Altogether, we have not met with a book for many a long day which has given us so much satisfaction: and the very merits of the work itself suggest a canon of criticism which we should not think of applying to one novel out of a thousand.”—*Weekly Mail*.

“‘Miriam May’ is the title of a very charming story. The heroism of the mother is of the noblest order. Descriptively, the fiction is excellent.”—*Dispatch*.

